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# THE SPORTSMAN'S LIBRARY

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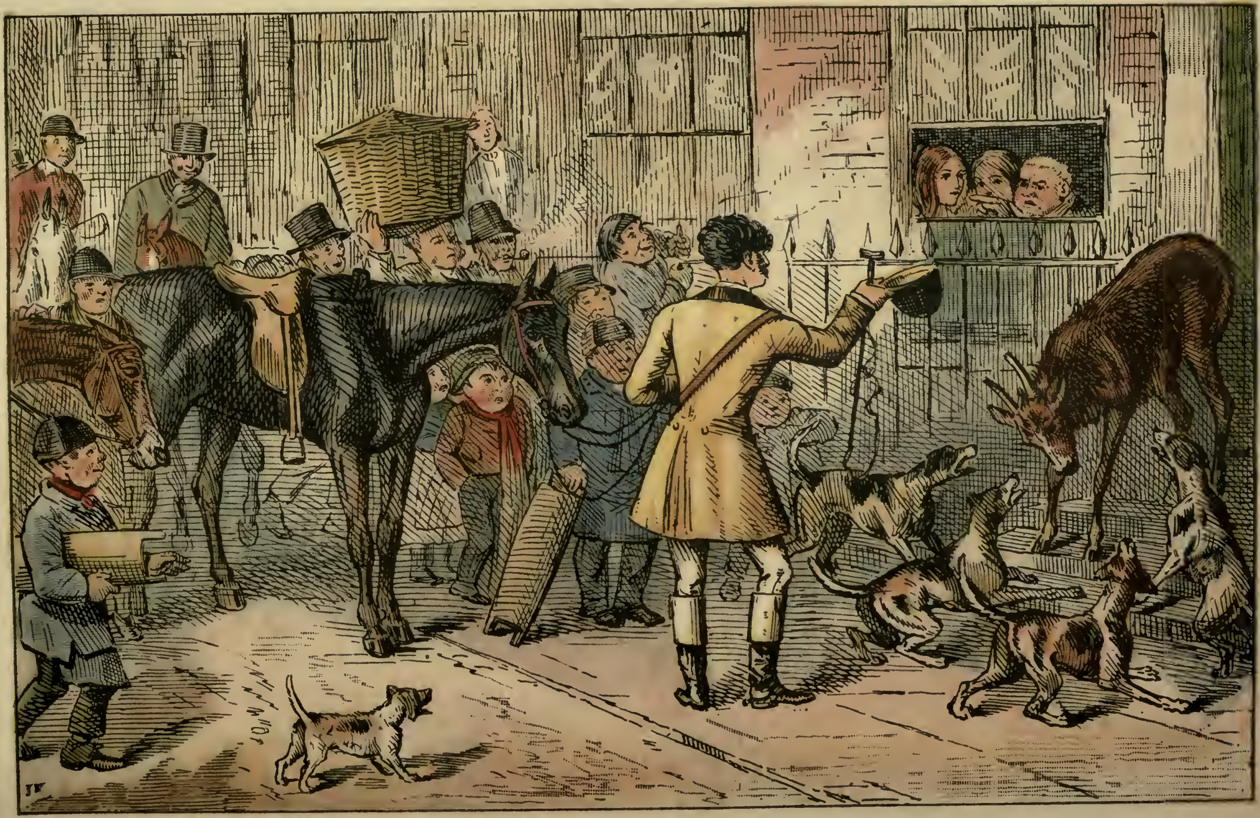

"I implored them to have the street door opened."

John Leech.

Frontispiece.

# REMINISCENCES

OF

# A HUNTSMAN

BY

THE HONOURABLE

GRANTLEY F. BERKELEY

*A NEW EDITION*
*WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY LEECH AND G. H. JALLAND*

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# INTRODUCTION

The fifth Earl of Berkeley had six sons by his wife Mary Cole, but inasmuch as he failed to establish before the House of Lords his marriage to her in 1785, of the six, only two, born after the formal marriage ceremony had been gone through in 1796, could be reckoned legitimate. Of these sons, the youngest was the Honourable George Charles Grantley Fitzhardinge Berkeley, born on 10th February 1800—the author of the following Reminiscences.

Presented by his godfather, the Prince Regent, with a commission in the Coldstream Guards when he was only sixteen, Grantley Berkeley afterwards kept a term or two at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and then went to the Military College at Sandhurst. Retiring on half-pay after a very short service, he married in 1824 Caroline Martha, daughter of Paul Benfield, a wealthy East India trader, who perhaps is remembered only as the subject of Burke's furious invective, when he denounced him in his speech on the debts of the Nawab of the Carnatic as "a criminal who long since ought to have fattened the region of kites with his offal."

After his marriage, Berkeley resided at Harrold Hall in Buckinghamshire, devoting himself closely to field sports, as may be seen from the following pages. That he was able to tear himself away from country pursuits and enter public life, in

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the attempt to remove the slur on his mother's reputation, is a thoroughly creditable feature in a career that otherwise fell somewhat short of brilliancy. His conduct will appear all the more disinterested when it is remembered that by supporting the claim to legitimacy made by Colonel Berkeley, the eldest of the six sons, he was endeavouring to interpose four lives, those of the other brothers, instead of only one, between himself and the title and estates. All the brothers, except the eldest, who claimed to be heir to the peerage, and the fifth, whom the decree of the House of Lords had constituted the heir, determined to enter Parliament, the better to support the cause that was to clear their mother's fame. Three of them actually succeeded in being elected in 1831 and 1832, Grantley being returned for West Gloucestershire, a seat which, although unsuccessful in his immediate object, he held for twenty years, in defiance of the powerful and costly opposition of the fifth son, to whom Grantley was heir-presumptive.

He soon became a well-known, if somewhat eccentric member of society. He published a romance called *Berkeley Castle* in 1836, and the unfavourable review it received in *Fraser's Magazine* was the cause of the unpleasant proceedings referred to at page 315 of the present work. The circumstances are briefly narrated in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. Accompanied by his brother Craven, Berkeley called on Fraser, a bookseller who published the magazine, at his shop in Regent Street, and demanded the name of the writer of the objectionable article. Fraser refused to reveal it, on which Grantley knocked him down, and thrashed him cruelly with the handle of a hunting whip. No doubt there had been undue provocation in the article, as was proved by Berkeley subsequently obtaining a verdict in an action for libel against Fraser, though the damages were fixed at only 40s. But it was a cowardly assault by two powerful men, practised bruisers, on a weak, defenceless tradesman. Fraser brought an action against Berkeley for assault, setting the damages at the same figure claimed by Berkeley in the libel action, viz. £6000, but he had to content himself with a verdict for £100. Two days later, Berkeley fought a duel with Dr. Maginn, editor of the magazine, who owned to having written the article. The meeting took place in a field near the Harrow Road, three shots being exchanged between the gentlemen, of whom only one, Dr. Maginn, was slightly wounded. This was only one out of many quarrels of which Berkeley's peculiar training and temper were the cause.

He is said to have been an ungraceful rider. "He prided himself to the last," says Mr. Charles Kent in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, upon having learnt pugilism from Byron's instructor, Jackson, and retained until far on in middle life a coarser kind of buckish coxcombry. He delighted in wearing at the same time two or three different-coloured satin under-waistcoats, and round his throat three or four gaudy silk neckerchiefs, held together by passing the ends of them through a gold ring. Even when he had come to be an old man, he piqued himself upon having been the last to cling to the flat cocked hat of polite life known early in the century as the *chapeau bras*."

He contributed to the *Field* and other journals many letters and papers on sport and natural history of a somewhat superficial kind. His regularly published works were as follows:—

| | |
|---|---|
| Berkeley Castle, a historical romance, 3 vols. | 1836 |
| A Pamphlet, etc., in reply to a Prize Essay on the claims of the Animal Creation to the Humanity of Man | 1839 |
| Sandron Hall, or The Days of Queen Anne, a novel, 3 vols. | 1840 |
| The Potato Disease, a pamphlet | 1854 |
| Reminiscences of a Huntsman | 1854 |
| A Month in the Forests of France | 1857 |
| Love and the Lion, a poem | 1857 |
| The English Sportsman in the Western Prairies | 1861 |

| | |
|---|---|
| My Life and Recollections, 4 vols. . . . | 1865-6 |
| Anecdotes of the Upper Ten Thousand, their Legends and Lives . . . . . . | 1867 |
| Tales of Life and Death, 2 vols. . . . . | 1870 |
| A Pamphlet on the French and Prussian War . . | 1871 |
| Fact against Fiction, 2 vols. . . . . | 1874 |

Of these works the *Reminiscences of a Huntsman* remains of most interest, and, though not without defects, has sufficient merit and has become sufficiently scarce, to deserve a place in the Sportsman's Library. The frank egoism of the author will amuse, it is to be hoped, without deterring, the reader.

Fifty years ago the discipline administered to horses, and especially to hounds, was far more severe than it is at the present day, and Berkeley shows himself in advance of the harsh practices prevalent in the field at that time by his earnest advocacy of more humane treatment (pp. xiii.-xv.). It is interesting, therefore, to find him resisting the proposal for legislation, which has since been carried through, prohibiting the use of dogs as beasts of draught. The fact is that, properly harnessed, *so that no weight rests on his back*, a dog is perfectly well fitted to draw a barrow without undue distress. No doubt many of them used to be overworked, just as some are overworked in Germany at the present day, and as many ponies and donkeys now are overworked in London and elsewhere, but, under proper regulations, there seems to be no valid reason why dogs should not work for their living in this country as they do in other lands.

Grantley Berkeley lived in an age when, in the hunting field, as in many other scenes of activity, the old order was changing, yielding place to new. His father had hunted a tract of country extending from Kensington Gardens on the east to the suburbs of Bristol on the west; the altered circumstances which gradually convinced Berkeley that the Harrow country was no longer suitable for stag-hunting are naïvely described in Chapter IV. Perhaps a master of more conciliatory methods might have carried on for some years longer, in spite of the spread of building and market gardens; but the repetition of such incidents as the one described as taking place near Uxbridge (p. 60) soon rendered the situation intolerable, and Berkeley reluctantly resigned that part of his father's old country, exchanging the hereditary orange-tawny for the scarlet of the Oakley foxhounds, of which he became master. He gives his own account of the disagreement which soon ensued between him and the members of the hunt, but no doubt there was another side to the question out of which it arose.

One suggestion which he makes at considerable length (p. 225) seems to merit as much consideration now as it did at the time he was writing, namely, that the Queen's staghounds should be kept as foxhounds in the New Forest. At that time the New Forest deer, both red and fallow, had been doomed to extinction. The sentence has been reprieved; staghounds have been kept there ever since, and there can be no question that that ancient chace is a more fitting scene for the Royal pack than the semi-suburban country it hunts now, with all the cockney incidents and indecorous episodes incident to such a locality. Moreover, the reasonable objection which many sportsmen and others feel to the pursuit of a carted stag would disappear in regard to wild stags and bucks found in the forest, separated from the herd by the tufters and hunted only when in "pride of grease." The Queen's buckhounds would become an object of popular pride, instead of one for which halting apology has to be made annually in discussing the money voted for them.

It is satisfactory to note, *pace* Mr. Auberon Herbert, the improvement in the administration of the New Forest since the bitter complaint uttered by the author in Chapter XIV. No two people, untrained to scientific forestry, can ever be got to agree as to the right management of woodlands; the timely felling and replanting, which go on like clockwork—and remunerative clockwork—in German forests, offend too many predilections to be undertaken in Hampshire, though, in fact, the ordinary operations of forestry contribute greatly to the charm of woodland scenery. But means have been taken to maintain the general character of the New Forest, while preserving the rights of common pasturage. It remains, and may long remain, a vast national playground, a liberal harbour for game and other wild animals and plants.

With all his faults, Grantley Berkeley's intense love of horse and hound, of wild nature and country life, must secure the sympathy of his readers, and enable them to pass lightly over the evidence of the egoism and occasional solecisms in good taste which may be encountered. He died on 23rd February 1881, at Longfleet, near Poole, and his two sons also died without issue.

HERBERT MAXWELL.

Monreith, 1897.

TO

THE EARL OF MALMSBURY

IN TOKEN OF

PRIVATE ESTEEM AND PUBLIC REGARD

These Pages

ARE DEDICATED BY HIS FRIEND

THE AUTHOR

# AUTHOR'S PREFACE

These *Reminiscences of a Huntsman* are offered to the Public, in the hope that, while they may afford amusement to the Reader, whether sportsman or naturalist, they may at the same time convey to the booted and spurred of the rising generation a higher appreciation of the animals of their use or abuse; for in many kennels I have seen as much of the one as of the other.

Many men have really seemed to me to opine that a horse was only made to be sat upon, jerked in the mouth and spurred, whipped or driven, while hound and dog were locomotive machines, unsusceptible of weariness, to be lashed when in fault, and ridden after when in the right, and that neither the one nor the other were susceptible, under better treatment, of increased capabilities. In short, their owners seemed to fancy, that, "like the walnut-tree, the more you beat them the better they be;" and that the duty of a huntsman lay in throwing the hounds into cover, while that of a whipper-in was to give a cut to every hound on road and field that came within the reach of his long whip. There is an old saying, that "not one horse in a thousand suits a single snaffle, and that not one man in a million is fit to be entrusted with a curb." To that old saying I add, that there is not one huntsman or dog-breaker in a thousand fit to carry a whip, and not one whipper-in in a million who can discriminate when to hit hard, or when to be content with rating, and, though last not least, when to hold his tongue. My maxim is, rather to let a hundred faults pass without a blow than strike a constitutionally timid animal, or one that is not conscious of his fault. You may, if not governed by a nice discrimination, whip a dozen faults in when you flog one out. No hound, no dog, should ever be coupled up to a gate-post and thrashed, as I have seen done; the ceremony of coaxing him first to be caught, and then the coupling of him up, removes all recollection from the animal's mind of what he had been doing, and renders punishment vain. When doing wrong let the hound be got up to, red-handed in the fact, and, at the right moment, hit hard; then, when he flies the scene of his errors and reaches his huntsman, by the side of the huntsman's horse he should find an Alsatia for every sin, and by his huntsman be coaxed for coming there.

I once saw Beer, who hunted the Oakley hounds, taking to the pack after Mr. Dauncey had resigned it, kill a cub at Chellington. The hounds he had succeeded to were undoubtedly slack, their spirits never having been roused over a dead fox, a triumph, by the bye, they seldom got, and therefore the more need to rejoice when such an unwonted event happened. The day was close and sultry, and the hounds longing, when they had killed their fox, for shade and water. When the fox was rather carelessly padded and brushed, Beer lifted the fox over his head, and hallooed to the pack to come and break him up. One or two moved idly forward, but the rest still lay stretched in the shade. To my horror, I heard an order given to the whippers-in, to "lay into them," which was accordingly done; but as the lash does not increase a hound's appetite nor arouse his eagerness, though the pack sought their huntsman to escape the whip, very few of them touched the fox. They were, in fact, whipped for having killed the fox, and could have understood their punishment in no other light. I remember reporting what I had witnessed to the present Duke of Bedford, who agreed with me in repudiating the act of the huntsman. Such want of discrimination as this I would caution the rising generation to avoid; and how I should have dealt with a pack of hounds so situated, must be gleaned from pages to come: it is not a legitimate theme for a preface.

While writing this work, I am sitting in my study at Beacon Lodge, the wide and open window admitting the southerly air fresh from the blue wave of Christchurch Bay. There are but seventy yards of short turf and lawn between me and the edge of the cliff. The farthest pet from me is my grey forest-pony, Dingle, calmly cropping the short greensward, while round her legs are frisking a quantity of rabbits. Here and there some beautiful little bantams, with their chickens, are in search of insects; the group varied by several hybrids bred from the bantam and pheasant. Nearer to the house are rabbits stretched in the sun, and basking in company with Brenda, the pet of the drawing-room, a greyhound who won the Puppy stakes of her year at the Greenway, in Gloucestershire. A New Forest fawn, now approximating to a doe, and, locally, almost the last of her race,[1] bounds in play here and there, where used to frisk my poor Gazelle; and a stout game-cock seems to preside over all, one or two pert little bantam-cocks absolutely availing themselves of the shadow of his tall, bluff breast as a cool place to crow from. When they crow, the only effect it has on the warrior is, to make him turn his head a little on one side, to look out at the corner of his eye, as if he would say with the Frenchman, "Est-il pour de rire, ou pour de bon?" A pheasant, a partridge, or a hare occasionally joins the various groups, and Baron, the deer-dog, will sometimes walk through them all, without causing the slightest terror or commotion, and, thumped at by the hinder-leg of some of the rabbits, in the midst of them claim a quiet corner in the sun. By my side, and watching my pen as it moves, sit two goldfinches, trying to sing down any slight scratching it may make on the paper; and at my foot a merry starling, who at times in a season is slightly indisposed, but as invariably cured by the administration of a spider. All these creatures know me; and, to make amends for the war and chase that I carry into other localities, I try to make my lawn and premises a scene of amity and peace.

There is a general move among the living things from Dingle down to the rabbits; the move is towards the house. The noise of the drawing-room window, opening from the ground, is heard, and a run is made by the tamer creatures to their mistress for some food; the wilder ones sit up and listen, and some draw near to pick up such part of the fare as may be carried by others to a little distance. To me all this is very beautiful; and I feel, and am happy in the idea, that when the muscle and lithe o' limb have left me, and age comes on, I can sit among Heaven's creatures in passive admiration, and pursue my favourite study, which, to my mind, never palls—the study of animate and inanimate nature.

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[1] The extermination of the deer in the New Forest was decreed nearly fifty years ago, in consequence of the damage done to plantations and to the commoners' pasture (see Chapters XIV. and XV.). Happily the edict was subsequently revoked, and deer, though kept within limits of number, are still fairly numerous.—Ed.

In writing these *Reminiscences*, and in summing up the list of the laughing, joyous, and agreeable men who have shared in the merriest scenes of my life, alas, what blanks appear! What numbers have been swept from the busy scene, who, to all appearance, were as likely to have lived on as the friend who now regrets their loss! In the wide acquaintance I possessed, many an amusing error, of course, has come under my observation; but with these I shall deal as lightly as possible. In the lifetime of those who committed amusing errors, not serious ones, I have spoken of them, laughed, and made others laugh; now that the friends are gone, I will remember nothing but their virtues, and only refer to the past when the anecdote, at least, is harmless.

And now, under no fear of being deemed egotistic, as some readers may wish to be acquainted with the sort of appearance the author still wears, and his inclination and capabilities, I will describe myself. My height, in my shoes, is six feet two; without my shoes, in the measurement of the Coldstream Guards, it was six feet one and a quarter. For seven-and-twenty years I have never varied in weight more than eight or nine pounds; my average weight being thirteen stone: and, so to speak, even now, as age advances, I have not an ounce of superfluous flesh about me. Age does advance, though: I see it in the "crow's-foot" on my face; it is evident by the snows that are falling among my hair; and, most of all, I feel it in not being able to quit the ground as I used to do, when desirous of jumping over an obstacle. Otherwise I am as much pleased with hunting a mouse or rat, fishing for a gudgeon or perch, when no other pastime is to be had, as I used to be when a boy; and this fondness for the most trivial sport I treasure, for it would be melancholy to find that, one by one, the humours of youth were departing. Enough, alas! will depart, whether we like it or not, that once rendered life agreeable: I therefore bid the aging and aged, as the might of their limbs leaves them, to cling, if they can, to the calm contemplation of nature; to the singing-bird, the flower, and the fossil. To see an old beau, with a bald head bobbing about like an apple on the sea, or a dreadful wig, dancing, anxious to leave the ball before daylight and the growth of the white stubble on his chin contrasts with the deadly hue of his stained and blue-tinted whiskers—that "ruling passion, strong in death,"—used to be to me, as a young man, so disgusting, that, long before I had a white hair in my head I resolved such a sin should never be laid at my door.

In concluding this preface, which has already carried me, perhaps, too far, I hope the rising generation of sportsmen will take this advice: Never to neglect any graceful accomplishment, either of mind or body; never to let the pleasures of the field, the forest, or the river override or obliterate the nobler ambitions of life. My ambition in that phase has, perhaps, been ruthlessly thwarted and strangled; but let that pass. A gentleman, by the enjoyment of any sport, from the horse-race and cock-fight to the boxing-match, may be the chivalrous knight and gentleman still, and remain unsullied by the people he sees, and who have a right to be, and are, even around the royal stand at Ascot. The lower orders ought to be the better for him, instead of his being the worse for them; and I do not hesitate to say that, by practical experience, I have found it so. There used to be a vulgar idea, that "a fox-hunter" was unfit for, or dumb in the drawing-room, or in ladies' society: and, indeed, I have seen gentlemen whose heads were capable of but one idea, and that not a very clear one, who had no other conversation than that pertaining to a horse or hound. This should not be; and among rational men, capable of making the most of the animals they use, it will not be so, for they will exercise the joyous chase as a relaxation from the more important business of life, and not as the chief object of existence, and return from the forest, the river, the field, or the fair combat, only too happy again to share in the refined, the grateful, and graceful society of woman.

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# REMINISCENCES OF A HUNTSMAN

## CHAPTER I

"Though wit in a ballad should bite like truth,
Or else 'twill scarce please our fantastical youth,
Yet here shall be nothing but *dunstable* truth,
Which nobody can deny."

*A New Ballad to an Old Tune.*

My love of field sports commenced at a very early age, when I was just able to follow my father, and see him shoot blackbirds, in summer, off the strawberry-beds at Cranford. The trapping of tomtits and sparrows soon after commenced, my amusements enlivened occasionally with the chase of a bag-mouse, trapped and enlarged upon the lawn.[1] The smell of the powder I first saw fired at those blackbirds is fresh in my nostrils still; and now my own gun will at times, by what still seems the perfume of its powder, bring back to me the sensations of a child, just the same as scents in the air will remind one of scenes and places long faded from before us; or, romantic reader, that from a sweet flower bring back the sigh of the lip that presided over the white hand that gave it to us years ago.

Time, that awfully fast stepper, but at the same time uncommon jibber, when he takes it in his head to be heavy, or hang from the collar, moved on, and I became the owner of a dog. Grumbo was the son of Bull, whose full-length portrait, by Challon, ornaments my dining-room, in honour of his race. Grumbo was of the bull and mastiff breed; his sire, the property of my brother, Mr. Augustus Berkeley, perhaps one of the gamest fighting dogs that ever competed for a prize. In addition to his pugnacious propensities, Bull added an amusing inclination to retrieve cats from whatever situation they might at the time be in; and my brother, then fresh from sea, used to keep him in continual practice. In walking down a street, his master had only to show him a cat sitting in a shop-window, and presently, at the distance of some hundred yards, to make him a sign. The office received, Bull would trot back, with the utmost coolness, to the shop-door; and whether the cat still sat in the window, or had removed to the counter or lap of its mistress, made no difference, Bull seized it with a grab, and making a leisurely retreat, shaking the cat all the time, to keep clear of the claws, he might be seen returning, followed by all sorts of missiles pitch-poling along the pavement in his wake. Cat-hunting with Bull by night, even in London, was a favourite recreation: although too young to participate in the amusement myself, I greedily devoured the history of it on the following morning; how many cats were killed, what numbers of helpless and coat-imprisoned watchmen thrown or knocked down, and all the escapes and hair-breadth chances incident on springing rattles. When I was a child, the combat between boxers in the ring was in its glory; and, hearing them talked of so much, I cut out card figures of Gregson and the Game Chicken, Jem and Tom Belcher, Dutch Sam, and all the fistic heroes of the day, and made them fight "in mimic battle o'er again." Unfortunately, or luckily for me—perhaps, ultimately, the former—my brothers, Henry and Augustus, were much addicted to sparring; and I have, as a child, stood between Jackson's knees, and hit at his hand for a quarter of an hour together, to teach me the straight blow. To be taught the art of sparring *only* is no use; and I would not advise any of the rising sportsmen to suppose that, because they can tap each other with the gloves, and stop quickly, they are a match for even a middling and ignorant countryman, for they are not so. To hit him is the best way to stop a "round" man; and a better illustration of what I say cannot be afforded than by quoting the language of that respectable character, the late Mr. William Gibbons, when he was seconding a friend of his in the prize-ring, who, though game, was not retaliating on his opponent:—"I say, old pal, if you stand there *taking* everything and *giving* nothing, *you can't win!*"

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[1] It would be unfortunate if any youngster reading these lines should imagine that these pursuits were essential in any degree to the character of a sportsman. The more a boy is inclined to field sports, the deeper will be his abhorrence of unnecessary cruelty.—Ed.

To learn to hit, therefore, is the first thing for a beginner; and it seemed to me, that my brothers also thought it requisite that I should be hit, as well as learn to hit, for they put me to spar with an older boy and better-set young countryman, a gamekeeper's son, at first; and when, for my own safety, I had learned, by quick straight hitting, to send his head into the manger of the stable which was always the scene of our exercise, they then set me at a footman, a grown man, who, of course, knocked me down. My brother Henry, who used chiefly to superintend these fistic matters, was perhaps the best gentleman setter-to with both hands that ever mounted a stage. At sixteen he set-to with no mean fighter of his day, Caleb Baldwin, with the trial gloves on, at the fives court, and had the best of it. I can remember hearing of the set-to between the present Lord Mexborough, if my recollection serves me, and Mr. Fletcher Norton, at "the Rooms," but whether they were Jackson's rooms or those of Mr. Angelo I forget. I only know that I heard that all London went to see it, and that, though the noble lord was quickest, Mr. Fletcher Norton was the strongest at in-fighting, and was supposed to have the best of it. The Duc de Grammont, then in the 10th Hussars, was very fond of a bout with the gloves, and could set-to as well as most Englishmen. From the prince and peer down to the gentle youth's serving-man or valet, all put on the gloves in those days; and I have ever been of opinion that it was a pity that so much dishonesty crept into the old manly upstanding ring, as to give the maudlin meddlers, and would-be over good ones of the succeeding day and of the present day, a hold for putting the prize-fight down. They fixed a false delinquency on the word prize-fight, totally forgetting that every village boxing-match, arising from a quarrel, was always for a prize, as one countryman invariably put down all he had in his pocket, and dared his antagonist to "cover it," while at the same time they as invariably took the fair and open rules of the prize ring as their guide in the settlement of the affair. Of this I am positively certain, by my experience both as a magistrate and foreman of the grand jury of my county, that since the prize-fight and village boxing-match have been put down, the more serious and foreign custom of an appeal to the knife has supervened.

Among the laughable scenes of my boyish years at Cranford, were two that occurred with that good-humoured vocalist, Mr. William Knyvet, and the late Mr. Duruset. Duruset was entrusted with a gun, one day in October, and told to shoot; and we were beating a field of potatoes that, ere the disease was known, afforded cover above the knees. We knew that nothing valuing its life, except a pheasant, ought to be in front of the singer; so finding that he was not keeping his line, I desired him to come on. We halted the line to get him up, and then for the first time I became aware that he was walking like a man with a very bad string-halt, his toe clearing the extreme tops of the haulm. Having asked him why he did not keep up, and wherefore he had such remarkable action, "Action!" he replied; "come on, indeed! It's all very well for you to do as you please, but it won't do for me to spoil the peasant's vegetables."

One day word had been brought to me that a mad or over-driven ox was in the fields adjoining the park, that he had tossed an old woman. The drivers prayed me to shoot him. Knyvet and Duruset jumped at my invitation to "see me shoot a wild bull," and I am doubtful if Duruset did not expect a seat in some gallery, under an indistinct idea of a Spanish bull-fight. Out we went, and we were looking for the bull when the drover, who was with us, cried out suddenly, "Here he comes!" There was a small clump of fir-trees near, with a low rail round it; Knyvet and Duruset soon scrambled over the rail, and were fighting through the bushes for a tree. Underneath the brambles there was a hidden ditch, into which Knyvet fell and got cast on his back; while Duruset, more active, reached the tree, and its boughs being like a ladder, up he went, and when he found himself safe, and saw that Knyvet was in the ditch, he sang at him every scrap from every opera or song he was conversant with, that he thought would fit his predicament. I had a double gun with a rolling ball in each barrel; and with a view to drop the beef as clean as I would venison, as the bullock passed us—for it was not at us that he was running—I shot at his head and missed him. "Dang it," said the drover, "you can't shoot; give me the gun." This nettled me, and I put the second bullet through the animal's body; it sickened the ox, and he stopped; and, reloading, I walked out upon him, and shot him through the head. By this time, and having heard a cry from the *treed* Duruset that "the curtain had dropped upon the bull," Knyvet extricated himself and arose, and asked Duruset "how he could be such a coward as to climb into a tree?" No answer. "Come down," said Knyvet; "danger's all over, and let's go up to the bull." No answer, but quantities of the scaly bark and dust of the tree kept falling down; on this Knyvet looked up, and saw Duruset looking down and behind him, with his hands firmly clasped round the stem of the fir. The fact was that he was totally unused to climbing, and in coming down he had got across one of the boughs, and could not tell how to be rid of it; there it stuck out like a peacock's tail from beneath his coat, in motion, and waving as if it was a part of him. "Knyvet," cried Duruset, "can you see what I've got under me that stops my coming downstairs?" "Oh yes," cried Knyvet, "I can see; you're there for life, my dear fellow, if they don't send for a saw." On this Knyvet began singing all sorts of things at Duruset that he thought bore on his position; while Duruset expostulated with him, and told him "it would be much more gentlemanlike, as well as friendly, in him to reserve his untimely mirth for a less serious occasion." Having split my sides, or nearly so, with laughing, I came up and directed Duruset where to put his foot, and with a deal of difficulty he descended in safety.

I took Duruset out hunting once when we turned out a stag, on a quiet horse, out of whose sides I told him to keep his heels, and that he had better not wear spurs. However, Duruset would dress the part; and he was ready for the chase in white cords, in which he told me he afterwards played "young Meadows"; and whipped and spurred he was too. The hounds were laid on, but had not settled to the scent, when Duruset went by me like a shot. He cast a funny look at me; it was one of triumph, as well as of an uncertainty bordering on despair, as he vanished round the corner of an enclosure on Harlington Common. The next thing I saw was the horse without a rider; so approaching to where Duruset had last been seen, I found him sitting on a hillock brushing off the dirt; when he told me it was very unkind of me to mount him on the wild horse of Mazeppa, for the brute had run away with him. Seeing he was all safe I rejoined the hounds.

At a very early age my brother Moreton and myself were in the habit of going out at night with the keepers, to head them, if the poachers were expected in gangs; and this fact reminds me of a curious circumstance, attended with some degree of the supernatural, that chanced to my brother and myself at the same time. When a man is alone a vision of this sort may be set down to fancy; but when two young men, in no state of alarm or nervousness, see the same thing, and make to each other a corresponding remark upon it, it is strange if something more than mere fancy or fantasy has not invited their attention. A gang of poachers was expected, and just before twelve at night my brother and myself, well armed, went from the passage by the servants' hall to the kitchen, intending to leave the house the back way. I was leading, and had just opened the door when I saw the tall figure of a woman standing on the other side of the long kitchen table, which runs the whole length of the apartment, and as the door opened her head turned slowly to look at me. She was in the dress of a servant, even to her shawl and bonnet; the latter, rather poke-wise, shading her features, as she moved noiselessly along the table, as if going towards the fireplace. The light by which I saw her arose from a steadfast red glare of embers left in the spacious grate, and as she faced it to look at and move from me, the direct ray from the fire enabled me to remark a more than common indistinctness of feature. Door in hand, the instant I saw her I addressed to my brother the word "Look!" His reply was, "I see her; there she goes." He, therefore, saw what I saw, as his rejoinder proved. At the moment the chief feeling in my mind was fun, for I took her to be one of the maid-servants, or a friend of theirs, up long beyond the usual hour of my mother's house for rest. So I locked the kitchen door behind us, put the key in my pocket, and exclaimed, "Come along, we will see who she is!" By the old fireplace stood the great kitchen screen, towards which she seemed so noiselessly to glide, and thither my brother and myself proceeded, dashing round either corner of it, expecting to catch her; but when we did so we met face to face, and not the vestige of a woman to be seen. Speechless with astonishment as to where she could be gone, we searched every nook and corner, but there was no one in the kitchen but ourselves; our wonder still more increased when, on going out by the door into the scullery, we found that locked fast, and the key on the inside. The windows were too high, as well as fast, to admit of an escape by such means; and believe it or not, as you like, reader, whatever it was that had been seen by us had vanished. The apparition personated no one that I know, and why it appeared to us is a mystery, for neither treasure was indicated nor warnings given; so what business the ghost was on, if ghost it was, remains a secret to this day.

My reminiscences of other matters must not carry me away from the canine species, which is my principal theme; and therefore to return to Grumbo. It is a favourite maxim of mine, that nothing takes its character from its preceptor so much as a hound or a dog does from his huntsman: of this Grumbo formed no bad illustration. Not only was he my constant guard and companion, but when my godfather, the late Lord Grantley, gave me my first gun, made by Ronolds, he became my pointer, spaniel, and retriever. He would find a pheasant, hare, or rabbit in a hedge, and make the most amusing contortions to show me they were there, and to bring me up in time, looking round every moment to see if I was coming; and when killed, if they fell over a hedge or other obstacle, he would bring them to me, but if in the field where I stood, he would softly mumble them till I took them from the ground. From use, his nose became very good; and once put him on a prowling cat's scent, he would run her through any amount of foil by game, and either tree her or kill her. My faithful dog evidently paid me the questionable compliment of deeming that his master liked a row, for he never lost the chance of provoking one with some man or some animal when I was at home. As I grew up, and when I first joined the Coldstream Guards, then but a boy, he always found out when I had come home for a day, although perhaps I arrived at night when he was in his kennel, and the next morning always saw him in the sun with his shoulder against the stable wall, whence he could command as many doors and gates as possible, in the first place to watch for me, and in the second to wage war with anything he thought objectionable.

Among his enemies was a tailor from Harlington, who used to fit the servants; and on to this man's bundle, much to the detriment of the outside handkerchief, and of the garments within, Grumbo might often be seen attached; the tailor dancing about and sacrificing his wares to save his legs, and roaring for assistance. These onslaughts were never made unless I was at home. When we walked abroad he always picked quarrels with men on footpaths, or oxen, or cows, always, if he could, endeavouring to make them the aggressor. From understanding him so well, when many hundred yards off, and too far removed to prevent collision, I could at an instant see when he was bent on mischief. Thus, he would get on a footpath before some man, always selecting the worst dressed,—a travelling pedlar or tinker was always an object of persecution,—and walking very slowly with his ears laid back, and his stern hanging listlessly down. As they approached he would be sure to swerve in their way, so that they stumbled over him; this he construed into an assault, and the next moment saw bundle or wares pitched into the hedge, and the man going round and round with Grumbo fast hold of the calf of his leg. If his field of action lay with cows or oxen, he would saunter into their pasture and lie down in the midst of them: the moment he was seen, the bovine inclination was to gather curiously round him, till one more forward than the rest butted at him, or smelt to him. The latter was enough, and then the offender was seized by the nose. I have often wondered, mere stripling that I was, how I escaped being beaten by some of the men he bit; for I never would quit without him, and always deemed it my duty to do as he always was ready to do by me, to stand by him to the last. I always tailed the ox or cow that he had by the nose, and thrashed all pigs that he had taken by the ear, and had he been assaulted by a man I should have done my best to have defended him. I think a point in our favour must have been, that the bitten man was taken up with vague ideas of having been at that moment inoculated with the hydrophobia; for in the course of some experience I invariably observed, that the patient, the instant the dog loosed his leg, sat down to take off his stocking, either to ascertain the extent of injury, or to wash the part at the nearest ditch; and during those to him interesting occupations, Grumbo and myself departed. I have more than once been followed home, and had to pay the sufferer. Grumbo was famous on land as well as in the water. There was no better dog to find and hunt out a moorhen for the gun, to hunt a duck, or to assist in a mimic otter hunt in the chase of water-rats. From having seen me stamp above the hole where the rat went in (they always, like the otter, have a vent-hole to the air) Grumbo would put his nose to the vent-hole or "chimney," and blow down it, and then bob his face quickly over the edge of the bank to watch the water and see if anything went out from the hole beneath. When we killed a water-rat, he would eat it with great relish. To show the extraordinary sagacity to which constant use had inured this dog, I could leave him to guard a small slip of arable land in the midst of the covers, which was planted with potatoes, to keep off the pheasants, and prevent their scratching them up. He would remain there all night, to be ready for break of day, and I used to take him his dinner in a brown paper bag. On these occasions it was necessary to leave some property of mine—a stick would do—with him, as a sort of rallying-point by which he was to sit.

I left him the whole of one night in the park at Cranford, in charge of a waggon-load of red-deer, which had been sent from Berkeley Castle for us to hunt, when I assisted my brother Moreton in keeping hounds. Either the waggon had broken down, or it was too late when they arrived to unload it. Grumbo's duty was to prevent any of the labourers from disturbing the deer by looking into the waggon; and faithfully he did it.

Boy as I was, and not then very strong, as I had rather shot up too fast for stamina, I deemed my dog and myself a match for a poacher, and my first attempt in this line was on two men stealing pheasants' eggs, one of whom we took. They ran for it, and as their course was up a grass "balk," or headland, between Harlington Orchards and the corn, on which a cow was tethered, I shall never forget my anxiety, when Grumbo, not quite comprehending what he was to catch, paused beneath her nose instead of continuing his chase of the men. The dog, however, had some doubts as to the cow, for he looked back at me for confirmation, and on a wave of my arm, which he understood, by previous experience, to mean "forward," he left the cow, and took up the running again on the men. The men and the dog all turned down a narrow path into the village of Harlington, and in another hundred yards they would have been safe in the houses: it was with no small delight then, that, when I reached the corner, I saw one of the men fixed, and the dog lying in the path before him with a significance of manner, that if he moved he would be fastened on. I came up, collared the offender, and returned to Cranford House in triumph with my prisoner. I have never satisfactorily comprehended why Grumbo did not seize this man; and the only way I can account for it is, that the dog had still some doubt whether the cow or the man was the game of the day. By use and method, this dog was made to do everything. There are many qualities in animals, in which they are supposed by the vulgar to be deficient, but which are only inert for the want of being properly called forth. Whipping and ill-usage will not bring such gifts to light; it can only be done by kindness and example.

At the time that I possessed Grumbo, my brother Moreton and myself preserved the game at Cranford; and for the size of the covers and estate, no place had such a stock of pheasants and hares. It was but a thousand acres in all, on the outside of which Brentford, Isleworth, Twickenham, and indeed London, furnished a certified set of marauders, to destroy all living things that did not return home to our covers before the 1st of September.

At break of day, on the 1st of September, for an hour there was a running fire, indeed—

> "A squadron's charge each leveret's heart dismayed,
> On every cover fired a bold brigade."

To remedy this evil, we drove the outskirts in, so soon as the gathering of the corn would permit us; and on the 1st of September I always went forth and began to bag every hare and partridge I could get near, at break of day. During the preservation of the game, of course, we occasionally met with some difficulties. In the first instance, an old farmer and tenant, who had rented for years under my family, and to whom my father advanced the first twenty pounds he ever had in hand to begin with, after having made by the farm a very large fortune, qualified, and with a certificate, on the last season of holding his land, not only shot at the game himself, but invited the tag, rag, and bobtail of the neighbourhood to do the same. Unluckily, at my father's death, there were no reservations made as to sporting, and this man, therefore, for a time, could do as he pleased. He rented the park and every inch of land around the covers. Not content with shooting fairly, on finding that he, himself, could hit nothing in motion, I have seen him stop his plough when the pheasants, in line, had been following the furrow to pick up insects or anything he turned up, and, resting his gun on the stilts, fire among them, killing and wounding, at one shot, a considerable number. Such conduct as this was not likely to be tolerated by us, and I set my wits to work to be even with him. A considerable flock of sheep of his being in the park, while he was in church one Sunday, my brother Moreton and myself captured the bellman of the flock, and with about six feet of whipcord fastened a dead rook to his tail, and then let him go. Away he went after the flock, who, while we were thus tailing their leader, had collected, and were standing some way off gazing at us. As soon as they saw him coming at best pace, with what seemed to be a little black dog after him, away they went, and round and round the park the chase continued, the bellman, haunted by the rook, gregariously pursuing, with his friends all flying his presence because of the thing he brought behind him. Ditch after ditch, at length, were full of sheep that in their terror had become cast on their backs, and the bellman, a stout black-faced Southdown, was reduced to a trot. All at once he seemed resolved to face his pursuer; and having no wind for further flight, and not much of a flock left to run after, old woolly-sides turned at bay, and making a dead halt, and facing about, he brought the rook within about three feet of his nose. There he stood, stamping at his foe, and panting; the heaving of his sides making the rook appear to pant too. The bellman having caught his wind, and seeing that his pursuer was small, resolved to charge; and, for that purpose, after the manner of his kind, he backed from the rook to gain a little space, upon which, of course, his enemy made a steady and corresponding advance. This was more than any sheep's heart could stand; and away the bellman went again, till distress once more brought him up. Several times was this ludicrous scene repeated; and by our laughter, my brother and myself were almost as tender as the farmer's hunted mutton. Church service being nearly concluded, we severed the wool from the feathers, and tried to atone for our fun by attending the afternoon lesson. This prank, and others like it, soon taught the offending tenant, that if he shot he must sport in a fair way, or he would find that "Scots played best at the roughest game," and that his sharp practice brought on him similar measures. Although we objected to it, we could not prevent his making use of a right the law gave him. His use of it was bad enough, under the circumstances, to bear, but the direct abuse of it was beyond our patience.

I once knew an instance where a farmer was in the habit of putting his foot into every pheasant and partridge nest on his land, as well as on young leverets before they were able to run. This man kept a large dairy of many cows, besides a considerable number of fat beasts. Among his kine he kept a large black goat, who always accompanied them to pasture.[1] In vain was he warned not to continue his unfair practice: every nest in particular places was always found destroyed, though, with corn and grass above his knees, he could never be caught in the act. The following retaliation, therefore, was the result. One fine moonlight night the black goat was caught, a hole for his head cut in a white sheet, and with the white sheet over, and flowing behind him, he suddenly trotted from an obscure corner up to the herd of beasts. Oh, Jove, what fun! The admiral of the white seemed to signal the bovine fleet for a sail: up went every peak, and, tails on end, they tossed and scudded over the hedges—horses after hounds could not have gone better. They were found, the following morning, all over the vale; with the poor goat, who had faithfully followed in their wake as far as he could, unharmed, but anchored or hung up in his white sheet in a hedge behind them. That farmer left off his tricks, and for the remainder of his days refrained from his illegal and mean practices.

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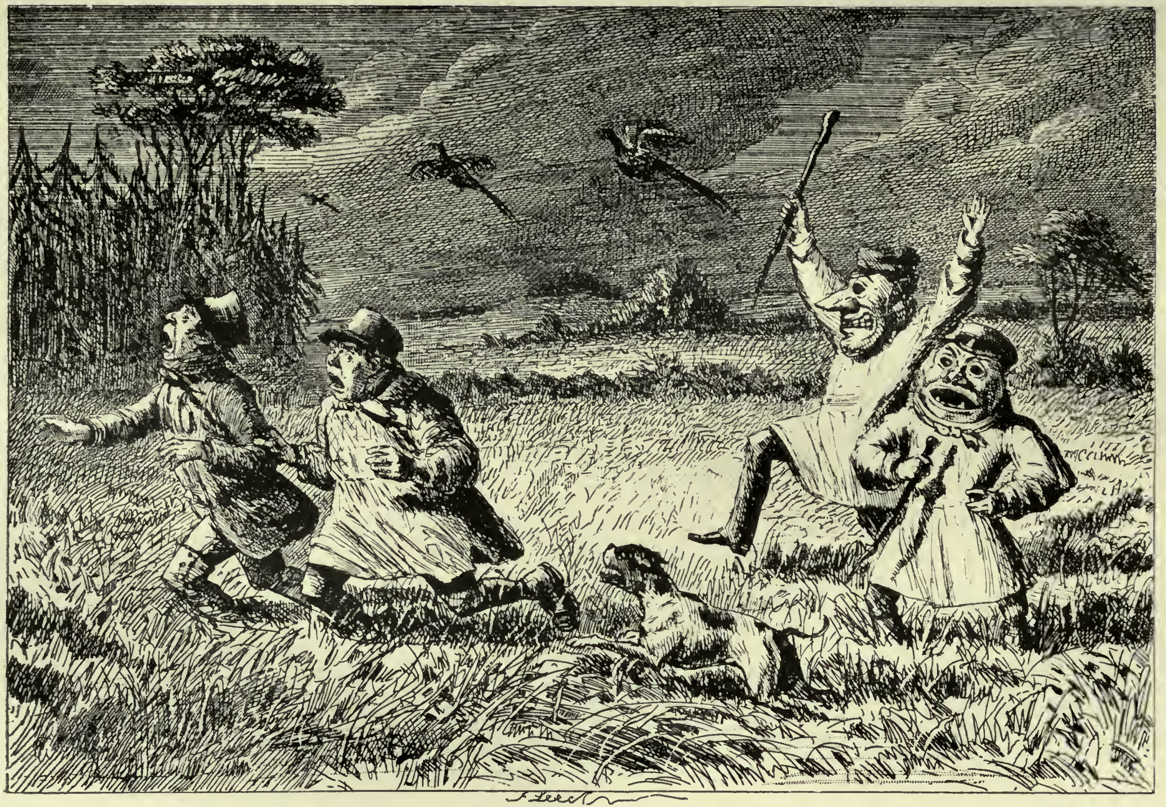
[1] A common practice, in the North at least, even at this day. The scapegoat is supposed to monopolise murrain or other disease that might affect the herd.—Ed.

A farmer, not a tenant of ours, but whose land adjoined the outside of the preserve, left a large barley field, as near to the manor as possible, standing till the first of October, in order to decoy from thence both pheasants and hares. This, in our boyish love of game, was not to be put up with; and the night before shooting we resolved to drive the standing barley. Some suspicion existing that the farmer would put a watch on his land, shirts were put on over our jackets, and each wore a hideous mask, and carried, in case of need, a stout cudgel. Grumbo, who was always ready to hunt or fight, of course accompanied me. At about midnight the revel commenced in the corn. We had not been setting the pheasants flying long, when, right under our feet, up jumped two labourers, and, shouting out to us, "We knows ye," they looked on our masks, and took to their heels like mad. They had some distance to run for aid, so we drove the barley, and departed.

This same farmer, in a subsequent season, left some corn adjoining his potatoes, close to his house, to attract the pheasants. As usual with us then, this was a signal for war. So we sent for my brother Augustus, whose person was not known, and for Captain Claxton, R.N., to shoot in his corn at daylight on the first of October, driving all towards home. Knowing they would be ordered off directly, their directions were of course to obey; but, as they began on the farthest side from us, to come off the longest way, and, in fact, to drive it all as we desired. Resolved to see the fun, I ascended into an elm tree which stood on the enemy's bounds, but within a few yards of the manor. I shall never forget it. The tree in which I sat must have lost



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How to preserve Pheasants.

many of its fading leaves from the shaking my laughter occasioned. They had not fired many shots—Claxton missed everything—when out came a half-dressed foreman on a pony, and, after him, from different cottages, up came several labourers, all clustering around and abusing the sportsmen. My brother was an awkward customer for a foe to handle; so I guessed that he would care for Claxton's safety as well as his own. At first, mine was but a bird's-eye view of it; but the wrangling, threatening, and fun came nearer. At last, I heard threats among the men of seizing my brother; on which, Claxton, who pretended to be a foreigner, and not to speak English, and was a very funny-looking little punchy fellow, put himself into the best-acted rage I ever saw, and, brandishing his gun, and screaming with anger, let out a sort of language pronounced as I spell it—"Touchee mon ami! ha! who Got for dam say? Touchee mon ami! mon Dieu! You sare—who vat vos it, you sare? [*To the foreman.*] You tooche mon ami, I shootee a vous, an blow you a hello!" This was attended with such an appearance of frenzy, that I am convinced the foreman and his labourers all looked on themselves as good as dead. At last they came into the field where I was; and their shots—for they still beat on, and fired at everything, in or out of distance—rattled into my elm-tree, and once or twice I hid my face behind its stem to avoid being hit, dreading, too, every moment that Claxon would see me, when, for fun, he would have been sure, even at the risk of spoiling the day, to have pulled me into it. However, no one saw me; and my brother, finding that the fray was nearly over, set to work beating the last field very closely; the foreman and his pony cutting across him, and, without actually touching him, impeding his way. Presently the poor pony got such a kick on the girths, from my brother, as sent him swerving for twenty yards, and very nearly spilt his rider. The lane was then gained, and the sportsmen crossed into our manor. In the lane, and close to my ambush, the foreman ordered two of his men to follow the offenders, who would soon, he said, be taken to by us, and learn, if possible, their names. The coast clear, I left my tree, and waiting till the sportsmen were hidden by a hedge, I pounced on the farmer's two men, very angry with them for the trespass, and very deaf to all explanation; raising my voice, to let my brother know his pursuers were stopped, and to give him and Claxton an opportunity of plausible escape. Claxton took the hint, lost no time, and making for the game preserve, climbed and tumbled over such cover-palings into the Moathouse Wood, as, had he not supposed that he was pursued, he never would have attempted. Augustus ran, and then strode off in another direction, and, knowing something of the country, got into a field that did not belong to us, but unfortunately not out of sight. Having detained the men in explanation as long as possible, I at last permitted myself to comprehend the affair, and sent one home to his master to say I would look to it, and invited the other to accompany me in pursuit of the man we still saw, but who had taken from me any power to capture him, or anything belonging to him, he not being then on the Cranford lands. However, I went up, and very high words passed between us, ending with an exchange of cards, and a mutual determination to meet at daylight the next morning, in a saw-pit, with double-barrelled pistols, crammed with slugs! We moodily separated, going different ways home to breakfast at Cranford; and the labourer strode off home to his master, with an evident idea of justices of peace, and constables, and the prevention of our next morning's murder. We had not long finished a very merry breakfast, when the farmer rode into the courtyard to know all about it, and to tell my mother that my safety had better be looked to. Telling him, of course, as little as I pleased, and saying I felt under some constraint in regard to the circumstances, with rather a serious quarrel on my hands, I pledged him to secrecy for the present, and assuring him he should hear further, bade him good morning. His "hearing further," of course, was, that I had been deceived in supposing that the sportsman would keep the appointment in regard to the duel, and that I set him down, therefore, as some nameless impostor, who, if the farmer could find him out, ought to be proceeded against by law. The farmer felt convinced that one of them was "a tarnation nasty little French Jarman kind of a Rooshian swindler or sharper, who wouldn't mind committing murder, as them foreigneering fellers always did, and never had no business with a gun!"

What quantities of game we then had! When the Duke of York shot with us, which he did, one day, after Mr. Greville had kept his Royal Highness waiting for an hour and a half, he bagged in the same space of time more than ever he had killed anywhere else. He had three guns and two loaders, and yet, more than once, I handed him my gun, because the others were not ready. I saw him kill three hares at one shot. My brother Moreton was not a good courtier, but, wishing to please our Royal guest, of course it was my duty to be so. A pheasant was flying over the boughs of an ash tree; his Royal Highness shot at it, and probably one shot struck the beak. The pheasant spun round and caught hold of a twig, to which he clung. I said, "Sir, your Royal Highness will perhaps give him another barrel, as he is hung in the boughs." Bang, bang, bang, bang, went his Royal Highness, with four more shots at him, and missed him every time. "Moreton," I said, "just give that dead bird a barrel from where you stand: he won't fall out of the tree from this direction." Up went my brother's gun, who hated killing the game, with such a look of contempt at me over the thumb of his trigger-hand ere he took his sight, that I could hardly maintain my gravity. He killed the pheasant, and as he did so muttered to me, "You might as well have left him for a breeder!"

I remember assembling once in the vestibule at Cranford; Sir George and the late Sir Horace Seymour were of the party, and the late Duke of St. Albans was my guest. We were just ready, when the Duke asked me to wait for a moment till his servant came. The servant arrived, bringing to his Grace a silver salver, on which lay a black silk handkerchief, very neatly and narrowly folded. The Duke took it, turned to a glass, and began to adjust it over the left eye.

"What on earth are you at?" I asked.

"I've heard," said the Duke, in a most solemn manner, "that you have a great deal of game; so I thought it would save me much trouble to tie up one eye, as I always shut one eye in taking aim."

We burst out laughing; and the servant, with the handkerchief, was sent away.

We must now hark back again from my first dog to my first pony, Punch. The first hounds I was ever out with were a scrambling pack of harriers, kept by Mr. Westbrook, at Heston. He kept them by subscription, and hunted Hounslow Heath, Harlington Common, Hampton Common, and, occasionally, at West End, in the Harrow country. My brother Moreton soon enlisted himself as whipper-in to Mr. Westbrook, and rode, first a pony called Yellow-belly, and then a wonderfully clever mare over the double post and rails, which, from the different enclosure bills, intersected the country. Never shall I forget my first fall at a fence with Punch, or the laughter it occasioned to my brothers Henry and Moreton. I could go blindfold to the spot now, in the road between Harlington and Dawley wall. We were not with hounds; but they told me to ride over the fence, from the road into the field. Punch did not approve of leaving their horses; but I put him at the bank, and unwillingly he jumped, but not far enough. He, consequently, came back into the ditch, and my brothers said I scuttled up the ditch, for twenty yards, like a young wild-duck or flapper, evidently under the idea that Punch was still coming on me. It was this that roused their laughter. I hunted on Punch with Westbrook's harriers, occasionally seeing them turn out a bag fox, till he resigned, and then with my brother's harriers; afterwards two or three of them kept harriers, jointly, or in turns, at Cranford, and still the chase kept on. About this time, old Tom Oldaker, who had been my father's huntsman, but who then hunted Mr. Combe's hounds from the Gerrard's Cross Kennel, and which, from my father having hunted that country, were still called the Old Berkeley, was told to get me a hunter. Tom sold us a mare, neat enough to look at, but about as much of a hunter as any ladykiller in London; as bad a thing to mount a young hand on as could well be selected. I rode her with my brother's harriers for some time, and when she became stumped up I got another. This was a thoroughbred horse, called Hertford, with one eye, and with him I was out of the frying-pan into the fire, for, regarding him as a hunter for a beginner, he was ten times worse than the mare. He had the peculiarity of always turning his tail to the fences, if checked to let horse or hounds go before, and then, when the time came for him to go, he shut his only eye, and, wheeling with a rush, dashed at the spot where he imagined the fence was. Between the mare and the horse I was completely cowed from riding, and had not my brother Henry taken compassion on me, and lent me a fine old horse, a terrible slug, but a capital fencer, called Sultan, I think I never should have ridden to hounds. It was so delightful to me to be on this horse, and to have to put him at fences to go clean over them, and to rouse him to his work, after the hot, fretful whirlwinds I had been on, who always went through everything, that I soon could take a line of my own. At length the harriers, after hunting occasional bag foxes, hunted occasional fallow deer. We had a beautiful little fallow doe that gave us several good runs, and then we had some red deer. All this time I was assisting to whip-in, as we could not afford to keep servants for the hounds, and my passion for the chase increased. I bought a black horse soon after I joined the Guards, of a gentleman at Datchet, near Windsor, who carried me very well, and was a perfect fencer. About this time I caught my first lesson in horse-dealing. I had an animal I drove in my tilbury, and, wishing to change it, Mr. Thorpe, of Chippenham, who was in the regiment with me, took me to a dealer set up for a short time in Windsor. This man's name was Everett, if I remember rightly, or some name very like it. We exchanged horse for horse, and I gave him a cheque on my banker in London for seven or ten pounds, I forget which, to boot. The horse seemed all right the day I bought it, and was warranted sound; but the next morning its name was Hobbler, for it could not put one foot, after standing still, before the other. On discovering this, I ran down to the dealer's stables—doors locked, and no go! the neighbours informing me that he had left overnight. On this I returned to barracks, and despatched a letter to my bankers, desiring them not to pay the cheque I had given. The letter was in time, and I was done out of nothing but my horse, still having a horse, such as it was, in hand.

I cannot help being amused now at the things I used to do, and that a good many of us used to do, in the way of duty with the regiment—as fine a regiment as any in the world, and with the best set of non-commissioned officers. In the mounting guard, when I was a novice in the service, a funny thing occurred in marching up to Buckingham Palace. The excellent non-commissioned officer was aware that I was a novice, and he saw around us many spectators, so, by way of caution to the guard, in case I gave a wrong word, he said softly to the men, "Now, men, in marching up, don't you mind what your officer says; you go right." However, I did not give a wrong word, and the caution, though well intended, but oddly expressed, was not necessary.

Assisting to keep a pack of hounds, and doing duty with a regiment, don't go cosily together. It was hunting day, and I was named for parade in waiting, in case any of the officers who were down for the respective guards fell ill. I ought to have been on parade, but settling it in my own mind that all the chaps were in full health, and that I should not be wanted, I stayed at Cranford, and went out hunting. Oh, by Jove! what an armed spectre appeared in the courtyard at Cranford, to greet my return from the chase! He took away all appetite for dinner! It was an orderly dragoon, with an express, to bid me appear at the Horse Guards next morning, in uniform.

Having filled up that unpleasant document, and dismissed the dragoon, the next morning saw me in the Orderly Room, before the late Sir Henry Bouverie and Captain Wedderburn, who was then, I think, adjutant. Sir Henry said, "I should find it much less trouble to do my duty," and wished me good morning; and I thought, from Wedderburn's good-humoured smile, that there was not much the matter. I returned to Cranford and hunted away again more gaily than ever. In those days we used to do the Deptford and Woolwich Dockyard duties, and a terrible bore they were—Deptford, Woolwich, and Chatham! oh, what bores! The best of them was, that in regard to the two former, one officer remained, and did all the duty, while the others went away, so we each got a spell of leave in turn. Alas! it was at Deptford that I very nearly was caught out again. The detachment duty lasted three weeks, and my week of duty included the first of September. It happened to be the last day of my duty too, the last day of August, and on the next day an officer would return to relieve me. It was much too near a thing for me not to be off, so on the last day of my duty, instead of going my rounds at night, I started for Cranford, to be ready for the shooting on the first. I went out at break of day to pick up the outside birds that were free to others, when, on my return to breakfast at eight o'clock or soon after, there, in that memorable stone yard, stood another military apparition! Bolt upright, in full uniform, a sergeant of the Guards, with hand to cap, it said, "You forgot the report, sir." Delighted was I this time to find that the ghost was a friendly one; so asking him "if the docks were safe and all right," on receiving his reply in the affirmative, I bid him to the housekeeper's room to breakfast, wrote the report, and gave him a sovereign to speed his return by coach. How many friends that were in that regiment with me are gone, swept off by the hand of time! I never see Colonel Bentinck now; nor did I use to sit by the side of Colonel Salway in the House of Commons without thinking of many a happy hour.

Two or three other amusing anecdotes of the Guards, and then hark forward! When we were quartered at Chatham, it chanced that I much wished to be in the midst of the season for pleasure in London, and, in consequence, as my brother officers resolved among themselves to remain and do their duty, they good-naturedly favoured my desire, took my guards, and enabled me to ride backwards and forwards to town on as good a hack as ever was ridden, called Tippetty-whitchet. This I did after every parade, from which a very kind commanding officer would not (for ever) excuse me. The late Colonel Sutton was in command, and as almost every officer kept a dog, one day, when half a dozen curs were barking at me, Sutton said, good-humouredly, "Why, Berkeley, you are so little here, the very regimental dogs don't know you." Heaven knows there was not much society just then, if there ever is, in Chatham, so the dining out of an officer of my regiment was very rare, and the one who did dine out often had some practical or boyish joke played on him. One day the lot to dine out fell on a friend of mine, when the old choleric and bearded barrack goat was inducted into his bedroom, in company with all the cur dogs of the barrack yard, and the barrack-master's cock and hens, which were put to roost on the back of the tent bed. The lamp at the foot of the stairs, whereat he would have to light his candle, was then carefully extinguished, and everybody retired to their rooms. Late at night the entrance-door opened, and my friend's voice was heard apostrophising the defunct light, and the trimming of lamps by degenerate mess-waiters. Ere he had stumbled many steps up the dark stairs, the goat, supposed to be in the barrack yard, came in for his share of malediction, for wafting his perfume even to the officers' apartments. As the irate but unsuspecting step neared the bedroom door, a creeping noise of nails might be heard on its floor within, of dogs who were tired of a blind mêlée in the dark with the choleric goat, and who knew that they were where they ought not to be, and that in all probability kicks were coming. The nails all congregated to the crack of the door, and when it was opened every dog dashed over each other's back to get out, some yelling with what they had, and others in expectation of what they might get, and downstairs they all went, an avalanche of canine fears. Having, as it is supposed, kicked till he found the landing-place clear, an angry voice from the kicker, it was presumed, was directed towards the doors of suspected delinquents; and the words, "if I knew," and "cowards," were distinguished by the side-split listeners, who were well aware that the fun was not half over. The door of the bedroom then closed with a bang, and the first note of a renewed strife was that uttered by the choleric goat, who was up on his hind-legs butting and baaing away like mad. The noise as of two combatants closing in a trial of strength was then heard, the bedroom door was shortly reopened, and the goat was hurled downstairs. "Not all done yet," said the listeners, and a long interval of quiet followed, broken only by an occasional step about the room, as of a man undressing. It seemed then that a tall form threw itself on the bed, and either with head or arms, or both, swept the cock and hens from their quiet roost just above the pillow. Cock, cock, cock, cock, cackle, cackle, cackle, was then the cry, and the screams of the feathered intruders, who were caught and flung out of the window, followed.

The last reminiscence of the Guards arises from an order that was issued for a piquet at Carlton House every night: it marched in at dark, and out again at daylight—no bed for the officer, and no dinner. Now as nothing was to be done by sitting up, and as our mess dinner on guard at St. James's was a long way off to have a slice cut from, I think we might have been cared for better. In command of one of these piquets, on a dark winter's night, made doubly black by a thick fog from the east, I was vigilantly going my rounds, accompanied by a drummer with a lantern, a sergeant, and a file of men. The light, such as it was, only made darkness visible, and afforded no insight as to the road we were traversing. A sentry's customary stamp was heard, and towards it we thought we were making progress, when all of a sudden a most fearful crash echoed through those sacred gardens, accompanied with a rumbling sound for which I could not account. It surprised us all, particularly the little drummer, who, raising the dim lantern over his head, peered all round him in the direction of the moving noise, for it evidently changed its place, with intense anxiety to ascertain the cause. When a lantern is lifted over the head in a dark night, and the eyes of the bearer cease to look before him, it is not likely that any stumbling-block should be avoided, and all in a moment I missed the drummer from before me, lost his light, and heard a splashing of water. At first I thought we must have wandered to the Serpentine, but my next act was to feel the way with my foot, and to ask "Where the devil are you?" My foot told me I stood on the brink of something, and a voice answered, "In the pool, sir!" The butt of the sergeant's halbert soon brought the drummer to dry land, and I suppose he must have fallen into some place either to hold gold and silver fish, or to water the gardens from. I never saw "the pool," so can't tell. The noise round the garden, accompanied now by the occasional crushing of a shrub, still continued, when all at once we heard the bleat of a sheep. The fact was, one of those odd dogs who attach themselves to the different guards, and always attend the mounting and relief without showing a predilection for either regiment, had entered the guard-room with the men, and accompanied us in the rounds at night, and took a slight turn at some sheep, penned in hurdles to improve the turf on the lawn. In writing my report in the morning, I described the temporary loss of a drummer in a cesspool or something like it, but as the report was rather droll, the "C. O." would not have it, and told me to be serious, and write another.

# CHAPTER II

> "At length, one windeth where the wave hath left
> The unguarded portals of the gorge, and there
> Far-wandering halts; and from a rocky cleft
> Spreads his keen nostril to the whispering air;
> Then with trail'd ears, moves cowering o'er the ground,
> The deep bay booming breaks:—the scent is found."
>
> BULWER LYTTON.

ALTHOUGH I may not countenance, in this true reminiscence, the poetical licence of my friend, from whose beautiful poem I take the above motto, wherein he makes the hound own a scent after a tide has been over it, I cannot help selecting the lines on account of their graceful expression. I have seen a hound in my pack of stag-hounds feather on and over the slot of a deer, though he did not speak to it, on the day following that on which the deer had passed; but a tide would remove every vestige of the line, as no hound could hunt after it had receded.

We now come to a period when the hounds devolved upon my brother Moreton and myself, when we made them stag-hounds exclusively, and adopted the tawny coats, in which hue the huntsmen of the Lord Berkeleys always rode. Smith, in his MS. history of our family, speaks of a Lord Berkeley who used to keep his hounds at the village of Charing, with thirty huntsmen in tawny coats to attend upon them. My father maintained the orange, or yellow, or tawny plush for his hunt. Mr. Combe, in remembrance of the name, called his hounds the Old Berkeley, and retained our livery;[1] and it has ever been a marvel to me why, in the present establishment at Berkeley Castle, where the old livery, on account of the ancient halls, had a right to shine in all its wonted brilliancy, it should not have been kept up. To show the increase of packs of hounds in the last eighty or hundred years, my father used to hunt all the country from Kensington Gardens to Berkeley Castle and Bristol. Scratch Wood, a cover close to Wormwood Scrubs, was the nearest cover to London; but I have heard old Tom Oldaker say, that, while with my father, he found a fox in Scratch Wood, and lost him in the rough ground and cover in Kensington Gardens. There was a kennel at Cranford, I believe a kennel at Gerrard's Cross in my father's time, and I know there was one at Nettlebed. Where else the hounds used to put up in that wide stretch of country I know not, but I suppose occasionally at inns. The tawny coat was only worn by the huntsmen and whippers-in, and the difference of the remarkable colour I have since found to be of the utmost advantage to hounds. When all are in red, the hound's eye, if a hound is thrown out, cannot direct him at once to his huntsman, his nose is his chief dependence; but if the men are in a different hue, which stands out peculiarly from the rest, a hound at a mile distance will come the shortest way to where his presence is required. I had an opportunity to observe the effect of the bright tawny coat on pheasants. One day I went in my hunting dress to feed them in a cover close to the kennel, and ever after that, the instant they saw the remarkable dress that had once brought them their food, they would follow it even to the kennel door. I turned their fondness for the colour to some advantage, for there were many very old hens in that cover past breeding and changing to the "male" plumage, the plumage of what is erroneously called the mule bird, and they would approach me so nearly in this dress when I went to feed them, that I snared them all off with a wire on a stick about six feet long.

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[1] The hunt servants of the Old Berkeley Hounds still wear orange-tawny coats.—ED.

I whipped-in for some time to my brother Moreton, assisted by the late Mr. Henry Wombwell, who also wore the tawny coat, but when I married and purchased a house near the park at Cranford, my brother resigned the hounds to me, but continued to whip-in. I then formed a regular hunt, and maintained it with a subscription. When Mr. Wombwell retired, I then kept one man in his place. By this time my stable had some first-rate horses in it, comprising, though at different dates, Brutus, Jack-o'-Lantern, Acteon, Ariel, Mason, Captain, Cassius, and some others. Brutus and Jack were the best horses I ever had, both bought of Mr. Elmore, with whom I always dealt. Mason and Captain I bought of Sir George Seymour; he never kept but one hunter at a time, and that was ever a good one. Lord Alvanley purchased Whisgig of him. Than Whisgig, Mason, and Captain there never were three better horses. As to Brutus's fencing, there are those who remember our running a stag through a breach in the wall of Windsor Home Park, made by the heavy floods, and by riding him over in succession all the timber divisions that intersect the park. I was riding to take the stag, and no one attempted to follow, save one horse-dealer whose name I forget; he rode at one of the fences, and caught a terrible fall, sufficient to prevent his trying the others. It was Brutus whom I rode over the river Brent, and, no one of that field following, I stopped the hounds till they had gone round by a bridge. Mr. Elmore reminded me of this not a month from the present time. Jack-o'-Lantern was also famous, and that he was so is proved by the following circumstance. Lord Cardigan and myself were going together in a run over the Gerrard's Cross country, Lord Cardigan, in the brilliant way in which I have seen him go, leading. We had flown a fence into a field, and were making for the one out of it, when Lord Cardigan, slackening his speed on looking at the other fence, called out to me, "We're pounded, by G—d!" I said, "No," and continued my course, feeling Jack, as he ever did when a big fence was coming, draw a long breath and collect himself. I took the fence, I believe, without touching a binder or twig; the bank was very high, upright, and the hedge partly wattled, and, taking a turn to complete his run at it, Lord Cardigan, as might be expected, was very soon with me. I know he did not touch a twig, for I turned in my saddle to see how he fared. Jack-o'-Lantern had but one eye; he was sixteen hands high, and I believe as thorough-bred as Eclipse. He never seemed to feel the loss of his eye when going across a country, for I believe with his one eye he contrived to see more than most horses with two. The only time I found the want of it was on a towing path on a canal. He there ran my leg against a post, and occasioned it some temporary damage. We ran a stag once from Harlington Corner nearly to Guildford; Jack went beautifully, but fell lame at the end. Lame as he was, the dealer, Mr. Robinson, offered me three hundred guineas for him, which I refused. As to the speed of this horse, I need only say that I tried it against a racehorse belonging to my friend, one of those who has left a gap behind him not easily filled, the late Mr. William Locke. Owners rode, and Jack carried the heaviest weight, and beat the racehorse. To such an amount of speed add the most perfect fencing, fast or slow, and an estimation may be formed of Jack's capabilities. Anderson, one of the dealers of that name who used to ride right well, and was often out with me, called Jack's powers of going "flying." As to these powers I can also appeal to Colonel Thomas Wood, of the Guards, who was out with me when we enlarged a stag, I think between Cranford and Harlington, and took him somewhere in the Gerrard's Cross country. It was the day that Jack was seriously injured by the stag, and I remember the complimentary remark made by Colonel Wood on the way in which the horse had gone. The injury Jack received on that day occurred in this way:—The hounds were running at the haunches of an immensely powerful stag, his antlers left on to the length of a foot, and were going at him full speed down a narrow lane between two high banks, followed closely by me, that I might be ready to save the deer. A turn in the lane shut the stag and hounds for a moment from my view, in which short space of time he turned back among the hounds and reversed his course at the same tremendous pace. He came round the corner of the lane again before I reached it, and I saw that a

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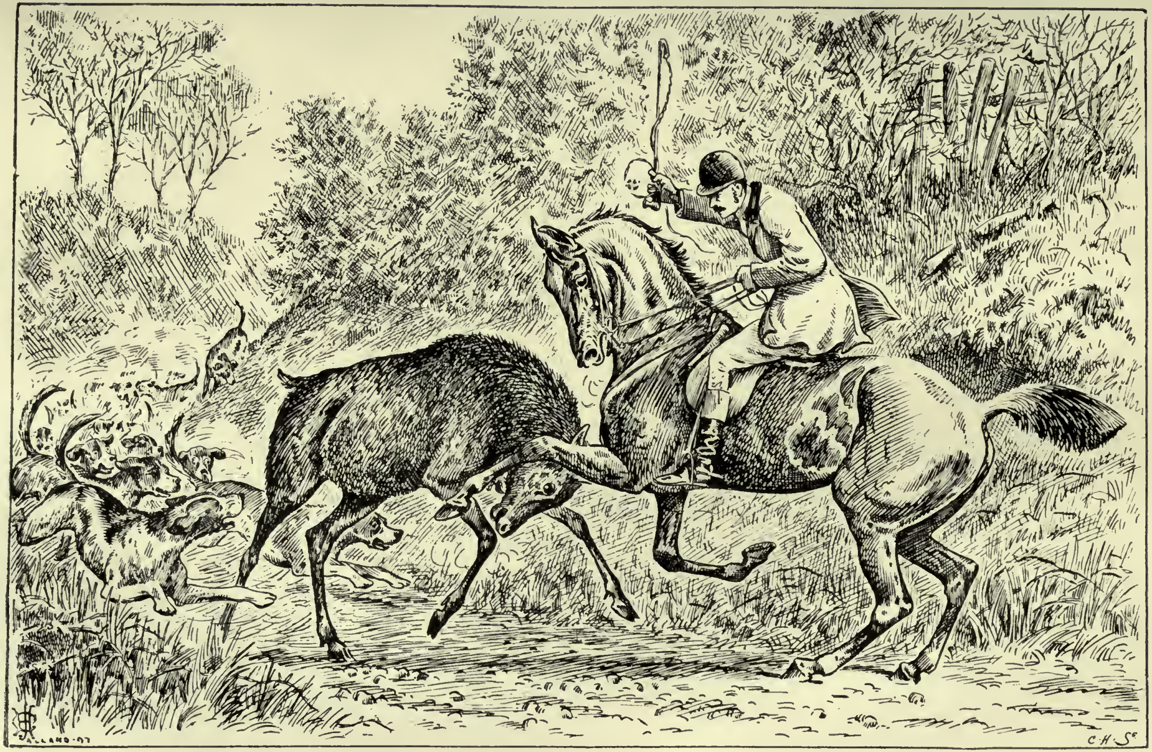


Jack o' Lantern charged by a Stag.

collision was inevitable. To try to escape it I pulled my horse as close to one of the banks as possible, and slackened speed to the extent the brief passage of events would admit of, but in vain. I saw the glaring eyes of the stag fix on me with that peculiar lopping to the front of the ears which always portends a charge; and on he came, meeting the chest of Jack with one of his horns, knocking my horse on his tail, and himself over, rolling away past my right foot. Jack did not seem at the time much hurt, and the stag rose as well as ever ere a hound could reach him, and on we went again till the beaten deer plunged into a pond at the top of the lane, and was safely taken. The stag secured, my eyes fell on the chest of my favourite horse, and there I beheld the skin distended with extravasated blood, and hanging down to the extent of a moderate milch cow's udder. The accident to my favourite grieved me much, and it was six weeks or two months before Mr. Sewell, the veterinary surgeon, enabled him to take the field again.

Having described my horses, the hounds must now be looked into. They were almost all bred at Berkeley Castle, and, consequently, were of the full foxhound blood, and consisted of about thirty couples, for hunting twice a week. I hate to take out less than twenty couples for either deer or fox, because to my ear there is something delightful in the cry of that full number. It is absolutely necessary to have as strong a force for a fox, in case the hounds divide; if twelve or thirteen couples only are out, or six or seven, as I have seen Mr. Drax attempt to hunt a fox with, the huntsman, if a division takes place, has nothing left wherewith to kill a fox. It *is* possible that you may go out with a weak pack of even nine or ten couples, and circumstances happen that will favour a fox's death; but to go out, and for a huntsman to feel that he is equal to meet any *contretemps* or adverse fact, he should have twenty couples of hounds and a second horse. It was always my endeavour to make the stag-hunt resemble a fox-hunt as much as possible. I never stopped the pack unless they had come into an early view of the deer, nor refrained from making the hounds as resolute at their work as possible; to effect that, I always gave them a deer that was killed in the chase, the same as if they had killed a fox. The whole time that I kept hounds almost all of them had by-names or nicknames, when I chose to play with them in their kennels or out at exercise. We often used to have a game at romps, till they all learned my humour, and were as sensible and as attached as parlour dogs. I had in my stag-hunting kennel two hounds, that came from Mr. Villebois to me as puppies, named Bachelor and Blunder. Both were good hounds, but Blunder was super-excellent. From our games at play I had taught Blunder to know Bachelor by name; my brother Moreton had aided in this; and if, in going to the place of meeting, along the road, or in returning after the chase was over, we said, in a peculiar tone of voice, and pronouncing the words as I now spell them, "He Bunner, where's Batchelder?" Blunder would go in and out the pack to find his brother, push his ear with his nose, and growl at him.

When by any accident a deer was lost—and water always had to do with such a defeat—I have seen Blunder swim into a strong stream, and quest with his nose every stick, weed, or mass of froth that came downwards; and when there has been none of these, he would try every bough that hung over and touched the water, just as my bloodhound will do now when trying for a deer in the forest, running his nose against and over the twigs that might have brushed a deer's back. If Blunder found any indication of the deer's being above, he would land, and gallop up the side of the river for some distance, and occasionally cross from side to side to assure himself that the deer had not gone away. Nothing could be more perfect than Blunder was in every phase of his duty. His portrait by Cooper was published at the time in the *New Sporting Magazine*. The deer sent from Berkeley Castle were splendid animals for the purpose, and so were those from Hampstead Lodge, given me by the late Lord Craven. Some of Lord Craven's deer got out of the park, and lay in Lord Carnarvon's woods; and to catch them I borrowed some bloodhounds, or what were called bloodhounds, from the keeper at Lord Aylesbury's, Adams, who had been a servant at Berkeley Castle under my father. I remember drawing with these one day till all were impatient, from the want of a find, when suddenly I heard what was like the rush of a roused stag, and the hounds then in full cry. I knew nothing of my pack, but deeming that it must be right, I cheered them, and, hearing the cry nearing me, I strained my eyes to see what aged deer they were on. Crash, crash went bough after bough, and I said to myself, "a royal hart!" when out it came, a low-bred, vulgar-looking half-starved heifer, with her tail on end, and evidently not about to last long. We rode, we cracked our whips, we rated, but all in vain, till the heifer got cast in the bushes and the hounds all hold of her, when, by dint of thrashing and coupling up the hounds, we saved her life. I found the deer with these hounds afterwards, and they did very well. Smoker, my famous deer-dog and retriever, whose equal I have never known, and whose full-length portrait I have by Ballinger, was the only dog I ever saw who was singly a match for any stag. It was from Hampstead Park that he forced a large stag he was set to catch over the park pales and into the river, and thence some way across the moor. I went up to the park pales when they went over to see what happened on the other side; but my servant, Benjamin Eary, whose discharge from the Guards I had purchased when I left them, made at once for the park gate, and got round sooner than I did. The stag, with his threatening antlers, had turned to bay, in a shallow stream, where he had ample footing, but wherein Smoker was forced to swim. Landseer's beautiful picture of the stag brought to bay by two gazehounds in the lake, with the eagle in the distance coming to see what will be left for him, gives the depth of the water exactly in which the occurrence took place. Just as I came near, I beheld the stag bury the dog in the water on the points of his brow antlers; and as I got nearer, I saw the dog, with a dreadful wound in the back and the stream discoloured with his blood, wildly rise, and, shaking his confusion off, he was swimming at the stag again, for the stream being strong luckily, he had been carried some few yards away. Ben was off his horse, and evidently looking at the condition of Smoker, when, as I came up, I called out "to get the dog up or he would be killed." I do not think then that there was more than three yards between the dog and the stag, as the dog came on to the fight much exhausted against the stream. The deer's ears lopped forward, he shut his mouth, twisted his tongue round his lip, and churned his teeth, those invariable signs of mischief, and was on the eve of another charge, when Ben jumped bang in on the dog and clasped him in his arms. At the moment I expected to see the stag send his antlers into my servant as well as Smoker; but, as if astonished at the act, the deer stood stock still, staring at his foes as they rolled in the stream before him. We saved Smoker and secured the stag. I shall never forget the pain my poor favourite suffered all that night in my room at Benham. The horn had pierced the back, just missing the backbone, and every motion caused the dog the most excruciating pain. Sir George Berkeley, who was then at Benham, was as kind to my favourite as he would have been to me or any one that had been hurt; and, thanks to his kindness, and the facilities offered to me in my attendance on Smoker, the dog recovered. A year or two following, Smoker, in company with two other of my deer greyhounds, Smut and Lion, was set to catch a large stag in Hampstead Park, who again ran him through the shoulder, but eventually was killed by Smoker, ere I could save him. The dog was roused into a state of fury, and, instead of the ear or forearm, which latterly was a favourite hold of his, he seized the stag by the throat and injured the windpipe. Lion was afterwards killed by a stag, and so was Smut. The wound that killed the latter proves the severity of a stag's kick. The hind foot struck her flush on the quarter or great muscle of the thigh, and, large as the stag's foot was, it went, like a half-exploded cartridge, clean through the limb. The integuments were so torn and lacerated that she died from mortification. Smut had been a great favourite with my stablemen, I believe because she always went out to exercise with the stud, and often picked them up a rabbit. The morning of her death I found the helpers with faces a yard long, and the poor fellows ready to cry. The little black tanned terrier Venus, who lived in the stable, was sitting on the bin with a huge piece of crape round her neck, so dressed by the helpers by way of sorrow for her friend.

There is a clever picture in my possession, by Cooper, of the fight of the stag with Smoker, Lion, and Smut, myself, and a favourite horse, who used to carry Mrs. Berkeley, called Cranford; but, with a sort of poetical licence, Cooper has depicted me throwing a lasso at the head of the deer, instead of stooping to catch him by one of his hind-legs.

In the commencement of my stag-hunting career, when a deer was taken by the royal hounds, or by those kept by Lord Derby, I observed that, if much distressed, they often bled the stag by cutting his ear. A more intimate knowledge, as well as observation of the animal, made me adopt a totally different plan. If an animal is bled thus in an exhausted state, before reaction comes on, he is killed; the best remedy for a deer in that state is to deluge him with cold water.

The deer that die from their distress before hounds, are those that are run into on dry land. If the deer is taken in water, or when he takes soil, as we call it, however much distressed, if not drowned by the hounds, he is invariably safe. For this reason, on running into a deer on dry land, when the animal lay on the ground motionless, and panting from exhaustion, I adopted the plan of sending to the nearest supply for cold water,—paying men to bring it in their hats when nothing else was at hand,—to deluge his sides and chest. With plenty of water, the deer was always saved. In a very sharp run over the Harrow Vale, with the deer in view, I saw him jump a fence, and but took my eyes off him for a moment to mind my own horse while he took it also: on looking for him again, though he had a wide field before him, he was nowhere to be seen; he had dropped down dead, and the leading hounds absolutely stumbled over his body.

In taking deer for hunting in a park, the safest plan is to have a couple of men on horses, and two or three on foot, each to keep a portion of the park to himself, and, without riding or running fast after the deer, to keep them always in slow motion. Deer are what we call over-topped, and, when kept long at a slow pace, become leg-weary. Following this plan at Hampstead Park, I have had deer lie down and let me secure them without a struggle, rather than rise again. If, by galloping after them and much noise, you set them running, they will often be seized with a panic, and, whether pursued or not, run themselves to death. Speaking of deer-catching in Hampstead Park, I saw a very funny thing happen—funny, as no mischief was done—to the gentleman at that time Mayor of Newbury. We were trying to single a stag from the herd; the Mayor, full-blown, on horseback, and in everything but his robes, kindly assisted, though totally ignorant of the nature of the animals he was riding after. When a herd of red deer charge, *no meeting them* will turn them another way; the thing to do is to ride the same way they are going, and then, when they see a man retreating but still ahead of them, they will swerve to avoid his society. The deer charged, with several old stags at their head, and the dauntless mayor rode right across them on the side of a hill down which the herd were coming at a thundering pace—I take it, presuming on the authority of chief magistrate. Two or three deer jumped either behind or before his horse; one old stag came right at him; but, as it seemed to me, dreading the shock of the horse, though lowering his horns for mischief, he attempted to leap over him,—and his antlers passing between the waistcoat of the mayor and the horse's mane, he caught the dignitary in the side with his knees, and pitched him off his horse, so to speak, almost into the middle of next week. The mayor went like a cricket-ball down the hill, but rose unharmed and in perfect good humour, refraining for the rest of the day to tilt with the foe.

And here, while treating of the red deer, it will not be out of place to allude to the match I undertook against fallow bucks in Charborough Park. The stag and the buck are a different species of deer, and, though to some it may seem superfluous to say so, there are numbers who do not know the difference; even Sir Walter Scott, in *The Monastery*, makes the Abbot's kitchener call a male red deer by both those appellations. Although the month was November in which the scene of the great novelist was laid, the cook tells his superior "there are three inches of fat on the stag's brisket," and a "better haunch," though then just killed, would "never be placed on his superior's table." Now, in Scotland, the autumn frosts are earlier than they are with us in the south; and I take upon myself to say that a stag of an age to be so fat would at that time be so far gone in the rut that no man, whether priest or layman, would have relished a slice of him; and his fat would have vanished too—the hinds would have had it. With us in the south a stag is not over good after September, though it depends much on the weather. But to return to the affair in Charborough Park, in which it fell to my lot to be defeated. The match was this.

I was to catch safely, alive and well, five full-headed bucks, not under six years old. In doing this, or in chasing for the capture, I was to use but one dog and one horse, and if either deer, horse, or dog was disabled, I lost the match. The horse also on which I rode was to lie down while I secured the deer, but never to be out of hand. In singling out the deer another horse was permitted me. Beacon and Brock were the horses—the latter was the one on whom I was to take the deer—and Odin was the dog.

An immense number of people assembled on convenient hills to see the match, the park being opened to the public on that occasion, very good-naturedly, by Mr. Drax. In canvassing the thing and in betting, the difficulty among strangers was laid on the fact of inducing a horse, excited by the chase and in a sweat, to lie down; but I told all my friends that, so far as the horse went, the match was safe: one of the two things to defeat me would be, either the dog disabling or killing the deer, or being disabled or killed himself. Two facts also militated against me which at first I did not count on, and though aware of them at last, could not very well prevent; and these two facts, coupled with a remarkably favourable time for the condition of the deer, were indirectly the cause of my defeat. I had resolved on tiring the whole herd of deer by constant motion, and not singling one out too soon. This was prevented by a good-natured but mistaken desire of Mr. Drax's to assist me, it not being contravened in the wording of the match; and he therefore, with two servants, as he thought, aided me in singling out a buck, and of course sent me out a fresh one instead of the weary and aged one I contemplated. The second *contretemps* was that, having fixed on the month of November, directly after the rut, I expected to find the deer in the low condition in which for years I had seen them, and taken them, in Charborough Park, for fatting. Instead of this, either among the keepers or elsewhere, the deer had been better kept, I take it, for the purpose of a better show to the public; and that, coupled with a mild dry season, put all the deer before me in full and altogether unwonted vigour.

The first deer was singled out, fresh and hearty, and I was called on to "lay on the dog." I said to myself that the buck should not have left the herd for the next two hours, nor such a buck as he was, if I had been alone, and yet I would have had one out thoroughly within the terms of the match; however, there stood the buck, and I gave the signal for the course. Had it all depended on me nothing should have left the herd but the old master bucks of eight and nine years old, who had been used up in their revels. Away went dog and deer at the best pace, clean out of sight of the spectators. They left the open and beautifully fair undulations of the plain, and the dog never got up to the buck till he reached the iron or invisible fence on one side of the park, and then when he did so, it was among a clump of newly planted trees, with frames of wood or "pouses" round them, to protect them from the deer; the worst possible place for me, because, when the time came to rush in and aid the dog, my horse, tied to my wrist with a leathern thong of about seven or eight feet in length, could not, so far as my hand was concerned, be let go, or we should have gone contrasides of one of the wooden frames. In seizing the deer, the attempt of the dog was good, but he missed the ear, and caught but a slight hold of the cheek; he and the deer then both fell together. His hold on the cheek gave way, and in the scuffle he seized the deer by the hinder-leg. This hold, not being the one he liked or was used to, he let go, and in going at the deer he went against one of the pouses, which momentary accident gave the buck the chance of out-fighting, and he turned to bay. Odin was at him, and when the buck charged he gave way, well knowing what to do, but, alas, never noticed the iron fence behind him, and went, still in front of the buck, sideways against it. The buck, not recognising anything before him of larger or more solid substance than Odin, charged with all his might, and pierced the ribs of the dog, with his brow antler, against the iron rails. I saw the blood gush from Odin's mouth, and he fell for a moment, but, when I cheered him, took up the running after the now flying buck again. The buck rejoined a large herd, and I called off the dog. I saw at once that I had little chance to win, and ere the dog had had much time to recover, a fresh buck was singled out from the herd. I doubted if my dog would be able to run, but to my surprise he answered the call and gave chase, but very lame in the shoulder. He reached the buck on the plain, in view of the spectators, made a very good attempt at him, but missed the head and fell. The buck instantly turned to bay, and, on Odin's coming at him again, rolled the dog, who had now lost all power, over on the plain. I kept moving round the buck on Brock, with three parts of a mind to ride at him, to see if I could take up his attention, or cast a line over his head, if any one would bring one to me, so to give a chance to the dog; but as I saw that Odin was sinking and bleeding, and that it would be utterly out of the question to win, having four other bucks to catch, I then at once resigned.

Having been beaten by one of the causes on which alone I apprehended defeat, to amuse the spectators, I got a brace of dogs and coursed, and took two or three bucks; and each time Brock never failed to lie down. After the coursing was over, Brock, then, at a sign from me, lay down by some of the carriage doors. Of course, in making this match, I counted on the customary state of the deer at that particular season; and I feel convinced that it is to be done now by a good man and dog, the only difficulty, unless Brock was, as the Scotch say, "to the fore," would be in a horse taught in that excited state to lie down.

## CHAPTER III

"While crowded theatres, too fondly proud
Of their exotic minstrels, and shrill pipes,
The price of manhood, hail thee with a song,
And airs soft warbling; my hoarse-sounding horn
Invites thee to the chase, the sport of kings;
Image of war, without its guilt."—SOMERVILLE.

IN the stag-hunting days of which I am speaking, among the members of my hunt, the late Colonel Standen, of the Guards, was one of the foremost of the first flight of riders over a country. On Pilgrim, and on a compact chestnut horse of his, whose name I forget, nothing could beat him. In saving a deer, too, he never spared himself, and he would at any moment go into the water, when a deer had taken soil, and was in danger of being drowned by the hounds. I shall not in a hurry forget his having gone into a pond up to his chin, when a little finnicking man, who had out with him a pocket-flask of brandy, came up and tendered him "a sip." My gallant friend thanked him, and applying the small flask to his lips began to turn up the end of it, while the civil little man, who wanted at least *a sip* for himself, continued a series of saltations, as male opera-dancers may be seen to do when the sylph coyly holds aloft a flower, in a vain endeavour to recover a timely possession. I remember Colonel Standen, and a Mr. Smith, from Hanwell, then I think both on chestnut horses, going beautifully together, in one of the fastest things I ever knew, over the Harrow Vale, and cutting everybody else down. Mr. Peyton was also very good. The late Mr. William Locke; Colonel Kingscote, as a heavy weight; and, though last *not least*, the late Lord Alvanley, also among the heavy weights, would not be denied. Mr. George Hawkins, on the most extraordinary mare to carry weight I ever saw, could always hold his own. Lord Cardigan was equal to any one. Colonel Greenwood, of the Life Guards, one of the finest horsemen I ever saw in my life, would at any time go into any water, horse and all, when the deer was in danger, and from the midst of the plunging and furious pack put his whip round the deer's horns, and guide him to the shore. I have seen hounds, when horse and all have been swimming, mount for an instant the withers as well as the croup of his horse, and in their blind eagerness, midst the noise and spray, catch at his horse's mane in mistake for the deer; yet in the midst of it all, the light and steady hand never checked the horse in his stroke, nor did I ever see the one or the other in danger. The awkwardest accident that ever befell him was when the stag and hounds were in the Paddington Canal. Colonel Greenwood was desirous of heading them, and, in riding under the bridge on the towing-path, the horse shied at the stag, and, in an endeavour to turn round, slipped his hinder-legs from under him, and fell completely backwards into the water on his rider. Both disappeared for an instant, and rose on different sides of the bridge, when in a few moments more they were together again, and saving the deer as if nothing had happened. I saw mine worthy host of an inn at Twickenham, "Mr. Tapps," ride up to the hounds in a flooded meadow, where they had got their deer, and, not observing the brook whence the flood came, take a dive into it unintentionally, when the hounds absolutely seized his horse by the head, as he came to the surface, and in mistake very nearly drowned him.

Sir Francis Burdett and Lord Palmerston were then of the hunt; and again Lord Clanricarde, whom nothing could beat (though I remember a curious fall he got, over a low rail, in the park at Cranford, on his white horse), was constantly in the field. Lord Clanwilliam, Lord Kinnaird, and the late Duke of St. Albans, were regularly out with me; together with Colonel

Parker, of the Life Guards; the late Colonel John Lyster, the late Mr. Charles Tollemache; the late Lord Rokeby; the present Lord Rokeby; the late Mr. John Montague, Sir George Wombwell, and Mr. Hugh Lindsay. Than the present Lord Rokeby, no man was better over a country, or a finer horseman. Indeed, my field occasionally contained all the hunting men from all parts of England, and Scotland too; from the Land o' Cakes a downright good one came in the person of Sir David Baird. It would be idle to attempt the entire list, so I have given a few of the names of those who were my usual companions.

Alas, in writing these Reminiscences, and in calling to mind the kind friends and pleasant companions that used to enjoy the chase with me, how many do I miss from the busy scenes of life; and in individualising them, how often am I forced to write those melancholy words, "the late"! Men, younger than myself, full of health and strength, have been swept away, and, though now but in my fifty-third year, I find myself speaking to some extent of a past generation, while at the same time my own active step, thanks to the bounty of Heaven, remains, and I joy in woodcraft and in rural scenes as much as ever. The thing that left me, and began to leave me early, was nerve over a country. Nerves are strange things, and not to be accounted for, and they quit the horseman at a fence, when they stand by him in all else besides. Few hunting men like to admit the failure of their riding nerves, and always lay their having been "nowhere" in a run to some other cause. Wine is never the cause of a man's unsteadiness after dinner; it is always the apple he ate at dessert, or coming out into the open air, that takes him off his legs, and makes him hold fast to the ground to prevent his going any farther. In the same way want of nerve never loses a man a run, whereas, if the truth were told, want of nerve and of instant decision loses a man more runs than all other *contretemps* put together.

The first symptom of a man's riding nerves failing him (I call them riding nerves, because they are decidedly apart from other nervous sensibilities), when the rider has been a good one, is in the start from the cart with staghounds with a lot of hard-going men around him, or with a fox from the side of a gorse. When the riding nerve is the least shaken, the eye objects to seeing men down and perhaps bleeding, and the ear shrinks from the crash of fences right and left, overborne with the knowledge, too, that there are perhaps a dozen fellows following in his wake who can't take a line for themselves, and are safe to be on him if he falls. Long after a rider's nerve has begun to fail him, if he can get a start with an advantage over the field, on a favourite horse, he will sail away as triumphantly as ever, but his nerves are not proof against the dangers that a long experience has shown him sometimes attend the most able horsemen and horses. When I say dangers, it is not that the man shrinks from encountering any danger, but it is rather allied to the sensation engendered by the shower-bath overhead:—you can't make up your mind to pull the string. In the whole course of my experience, I never saw nerves last so long as those of my brother, Admiral Berkeley. I am told that Mr. Ashton Smith's nerves never fail him, and all the world knows what a first-rate man he has been over a country; but then he lived to ride, and, I believe, almost dieted himself for it, whereas my brother, Admiral Berkeley, always liked his bottle or more of wine, and never gave his nerves a thought. The state of the stomach, or the amount of wine over-night, has usually a vast deal to do with it. For myself, my life has ever been a most regular one, never having been overtaken in liquor, as the saying is, although, when I joined the Coldstream Guards, I had plenty of thirsty examples before me. The sight of the fool a drunken man makes of himself, and the secrets he lets out, made me, at the age of sixteen, resolve never to place myself in that position, and nothing has ever shaken that determination. I like a glass of wine; but a bottle, when I am alone, would last me three days, though it is in my power to drink any quantity, and yet retain my senses. More than once in my life it has been my unpleasing lot to be shut up for a night with a host of fellows who seemed to me to have resolved not to rise from the table with their wits about them, and I was obliged to drink for want of something else to do. In the same way, I never smoke, though I can smoke to any amount, and have done so when my agricultural friends at times were blowing such clouds, as made it incumbent on me to raise an equally thick one, to save me from the mists of theirs. A regular smoker is scarcely ever sweet enough for a lady's drawing-room; but wherever he goes, and more particularly in damp weather, his redolence reminds you of the butt-end of an old tobacco-pipe. My abstinence from the pipe, coupled with the ability to smoke, has been serviceable to me more than once. Returning from the Broadway country after hunting with Lord Fitzhardinge's hounds, drenched to the skin with rain, in a post-chaise, I shut up the windows, and smoked cigars the whole way to Cheltenham, and never was better in my life. Also, if I feel chilled, and think that a cold is coming on, a cigar and a glass of hot brandy and water will drive it away. The sea, the river, the damp ground, lying on the mud in waiting for wild-fowl, never give me cold; London gives it me, and particularly the House of Commons. Lord Malmsbury and myself have both made the remark, that when a man, while out on any sporting occasion, lights a pipe, it is all up with the good he will do for that day. The outdoor servants in my employ who always carried a short pipe in their waistcoat pockets, to smoke whenever my back was turned, were utterly useless; and I have discharged some because I could not break them off the habit. Though much younger than I am, when in the forest or partridge-shooting, I could not only run or walk their jackets and waistcoats off their backs, but, while my lips were unparched, these habitual smokers were lying down to drink at every puddle. In regard to the moderate use of tobacco, I remember hearing the late Dr. Jenner say, that in the whole range of his experience, he never met with a case of great or remarkable longevity, unless the patient had made use of tobacco in one shape or the other, in smoking, in chewing, or in snuff. I have heard of a funny accident happening to a colonel in the Guards, who ought to have borne in mind the safety of a powder-magazine, from a cigar when out shooting. He was sitting under a bank after lunch, with a lighted cigar in his mouth *with a red-hot ash to it half an inch long*; pulling out his powder-flask, and unscrewing the top, he looked in to see how much powder he had got, totally forgetting that when he put the magazine up to his eye, his additional beak, with the light at the end of it, would be sure to go in and set fire to it. Up it went, with an explosion most terrific, tumbling the keepers over in fright, sending the retriever after something the dog supposed must have been killed in the other world, and mingling partridges, beer, and bread and cheese in a confused heap: his eyebrow and whisker the only things singed.

A cigar, on some men, acts as a quieter of the nerves, and gives them what with drink would be called "Dutch courage." When my hounds have first spoken to a fox in cover, rap went the pommels of saddles, flash, flash, flash the lights; "Give me a light, old fellow," said one, "Your flask," said another, each feeling that they needed artificial rousing. For myself, I never would resort to this; but when I found the nerves I used to have over a country failing, I was content with those that still stood by me, and with these I saw, and on good horses could still see, a deal of fun. Old Billy Butler, of Dorset renown, the last, I believe, of the old style of port-drinking, hunting and sporting parsons, used to say, with much truth, that in a straightforward burst of twenty-five minutes, while the wind and powers of a horse lasted, the riders of twenty years of age would beat the men of thirty, and that the men of thirty would beat those of forty, and so on. As a general assumption, this is perfectly correct; for in a burst of that description, each man with a start, the choice of ground and quick eye to the turn of hounds do not tell, but the spur and the nerve do all. The late Mr. Charles Tollemache, who belonged to my stag-hunt, so long as I kept it up, never had any nerves for a start among a crowd in my remembrance; but on his splendid brown horse Radical, the fastest horse I ever saw through dirt, if he got an advantage, he would slip away like wild-fire, and was very difficult to catch.

He was an excellent judge of ground, had a quick eye to hounds, and seemed so know by instinct the weakest place in a fence, as well as the soundest land. Jealous of other riders to any extent, in going through a gate, he would shut it behind him, and "beg pardon" at the same moment. The only time that I can remember his really going well was when we ran from the plough country across the Uxbridge road near Hayes, and had had a deal to do before we got there. Tollemache trotted the lanes all the first part of the run, the country deluged with water, and immensely heavy; and when the hounds pointed for the Harrow Vale, and came down for the Yeading brook, then a bumper above its brim, Tollemache, followed by Mr. Parker, now Colonel Parker, then of the Life Guards, and a beginner, showed in front without a hair turned on Radical. I had never seen him before in the run, and as he came out of some hidden lane, it seemed as if he had fallen from the clouds. Well did he know the state of our horses; and hesitating not a moment, he put Radical out of dirt up to his hocks at the brook, and cleared it, followed by Parker. On landing, he took off his hat to us, and, in truth, bade us all good-bye. Though I was on Brutus, one of whose feats was brook-jumping, he had but a trot left in him, and I therefore was obliged to decline a certain ducking, with every difficulty against getting my horse out if I got him in, and Mr. Tollemache and Colonel Parker sailed away, the only men with the hounds, over that fine country.

No man went harder than the late Lord Alvanley, and no man ever caught more falls. Not a good horseman, I have seen him, when his horse refused a fence, roll over his head into it, which a good horseman ought never to do. One day he had been hunting with me, and we ran over an unfortunate line of country, the stag leaving the legitimate scene of our sports, and, setting his head for Hounslow, Isleworth, Twickenham, and Brentford. Lord Alvanley left us before I had taken the deer, in good time to join his friends in the bay window at White's. They asked him, "What sport?" and he replied, "Devilish good run; but the asparagus beds went awfully heavy, and the grass all through was up to one's hocks; the only thing wanting was a landing-net, for the deer got into the Thames, and Berkeley had not the means to get him ashore. They say that garden stuff is ris since they saw us among 'em."

That splendid artist of sweet comestibles, Mr. Gunter, the renowned ice and pastry-cook in Berkeley Square, who was always one of my field, was complimented by Lord Alvanley on the appearance of his horse. "Yes, my lord," he replied, "but he is so hot I can hardly ride him." "Why the devil don't you ice him, then, Mr. Gunter?" was the funny rejoinder. On another day I heard of his lordship having been found sitting under a hedge with his boot off, extracting a thorn from his toe, accompanying the operation by whistling a favourite air from Tancredi. The rider who saw Lord Alvanley, and who was himself thrown out, asked him where his horse was. "The Lord only knows; I have never seen him since he gave me the fall." "How do you mean to get home, then?" "That is precisely the thing I am most ignorant of, unless, my good friend, *you go* and get me a chaise!"

Among the extraordinary scenes a hunting-field in so populous a vicinity afforded, or perhaps the oddest scene, was when a fine stag, covered with foam and stained with blood, entered London by the Regent's Park, and ran the streets to No. 1, I think, Montague Street, Russell Square.

My brother Moreton and Mr. Henry Wombwell, who whipped in with me, had stopped the hounds outside the Regent's Park, all but two couple, who went at the flanks of the deer pell-mell into the town. I followed them, of course, to see the termination. Women screamed, children cried, men shouted, and horses shied, as the unwonted animal came down the pavement or swerved from the passengers across the streets. "The force of nature could no further go," and the stag was obliged to stop and turn to bay, backing his haunches against the street door of No. 1, and looking wildly over into the area, into which I could see he had a mind to jump. I stopped opposite him, when, at the same instant, the dining-room window was raised, and two very pretty young ladies looked out, full of sweet pity for the deer and bland commiseration! They had scarcely uttered, "Poor dear thing!" when, cap in hand, I instantly joined issue, and implored them "to have the street door opened, or the innocent and graceful animal would be killed." I knew if the door could be got open he would back into the passage, and I should have him safe. With the most perfect simplicity and kind good-humour, they answered, "Oh yes;" when, to my horror, the coated arm of a cauliflower or powdered head, the legs belonging to which were cased in what seemed to be black sticking-plaster breeches, seized the prettiest of the girls by her well-turned shoulder and, cannoning her against her sister, rudely pushed them both back. "Yes, indeed!" cried the voice of a prim but choleric and elderly gentleman, the sort of man who breakfasts in what I should deem a dinner costume. "Let him in, I say!" "Hear me, my good fellow" (this was addressed to me); "instead of letting him in, I'll let *you* in for it, if you don't instantly take your animal away. Take him away, I say; you'll get nothing here, and have no right with your shows to collect a rabble about my door. Be off, or I'll send for the beadle."

The indignation of the old gentleman, and the idea he seemed possessed with that I was a showman with an animal that would, perhaps, dance on its hind-legs to please the company for halfpence, was so ludicrously irresistible to Elmore, Bean, and several of the London dealers who were with me (I think we had enlarged the deer at Kingsbury Springs or at a farm of Elmore's), that we all together broke out in a roar of laughter. This so angered the old gentleman that he slammed down the window and disappeared, I suppose in search of the beadle. While this was going on some butchers' boys had come up, and taking a tray from one of them by way of shield, with the aid of the by-standers I ran in on the stag and secured him. A board, if it is long enough to cover the form, is a never-failing protection against the savagest stag. He evidently fears that the board is solid, and that, if he charged it, he would indeed "run his head against a stone wall." I used to have a shield of this description made, and when the solid-looking thing moved, a stag, rather than be followed by it, would jump up into the cart when backed against the barn door; and it was in this way I loaded for hunting the wildest, and savagest, and most difficult deer. The moment the hunting season concluded, all the surviving deer were sent back again to the park at Berkeley Castle, and enlarged among their fellows; and to that, as well as their hardy nature, I attribute the superiority of our deer over the generality of those from the royal kennels. Five months in wild companionship undid all former artificial maintenance, and restored their running. The royal deer from season to season were kept in a paddock.

Previous to my purchasing a house adjoining the park at Cranford, my sojourn was at the Old Cranford Bridge Inn, then kept, as it had been for a number of years, by Adams. The neighbourhood of Hampton Court and Twickenham was very gay. I belonged to His Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence's Club, and was the president of his Cricket Club, and there were balls and dinner parties without end. The hours I kept not according with those of my mother, it suited me well to live at the inn, and a very jolly life it was. Alas! for those Hampton Court scenes that have vanished. Alas! for the thousand happy remembrances associated with that vicinity—the wilderness, the gardens, and the merry old Toy Inn, where the periodical and public balls used to be held, and I heard and saw what nothing can ever bring back again. One of the things I heard and saw I could have dispensed with. The bar, where old Saunders, with his respectable old white head, used to sit with his niece, had a glass roof, on to which some of the rooms above stairs looked. One night there was a roaring party above, and I was sitting for a moment, ere I went to my room to bed, talking to the old man. Crash went the roof of glass, and down came a cold fowl, the shortest way, I suppose, to the safe; and in a moment a lobster salad, a cold round of beef, empty bottles, and the contents of dishes, followed each other incessantly through the glass roof, driving us into corners, old Saunders with a pencil clapping down damage in inflammatory figures. I forget the sum "that the party upstairs," as Tom, the best waiter in the world, called them, had to pay for their after-supper frolic.

My hounds hunted twice a week; and the night before meeting, when the fixture was near Cranford Bridge, every stall in the inn and village was full, and some one or other of my friends came down to me over-night. On one occasion, every stall at the inn having been full, the fixture being Cranford Bridge, we had just commenced a run with a middling scent, when, at the first check, a gentleman, Mr. Mercer, I believe, rode up to another not badly dressed sportsman, and, after looking at him for a moment, very red in the face, said, under a state of considerable excitement, "Yes, I thought so! Yes, it is;" and, addressing the other, he asked, "Pray, sir, what business have you on my horse?"

The other, affecting the greatest indignation, replied, "Your horse, sir? What do you mean, sir? Do you suppose, sir, you're the only man in the world that has horses, sir?" He then evidently longed that the hounds would take up the running again.

"Yes, sir," replied the owner of the horse, "I'll swear that you are on my hack, that I rode from London and left at Cranford Bridge Inn. I'll have you taken into custody for horse-stealing."

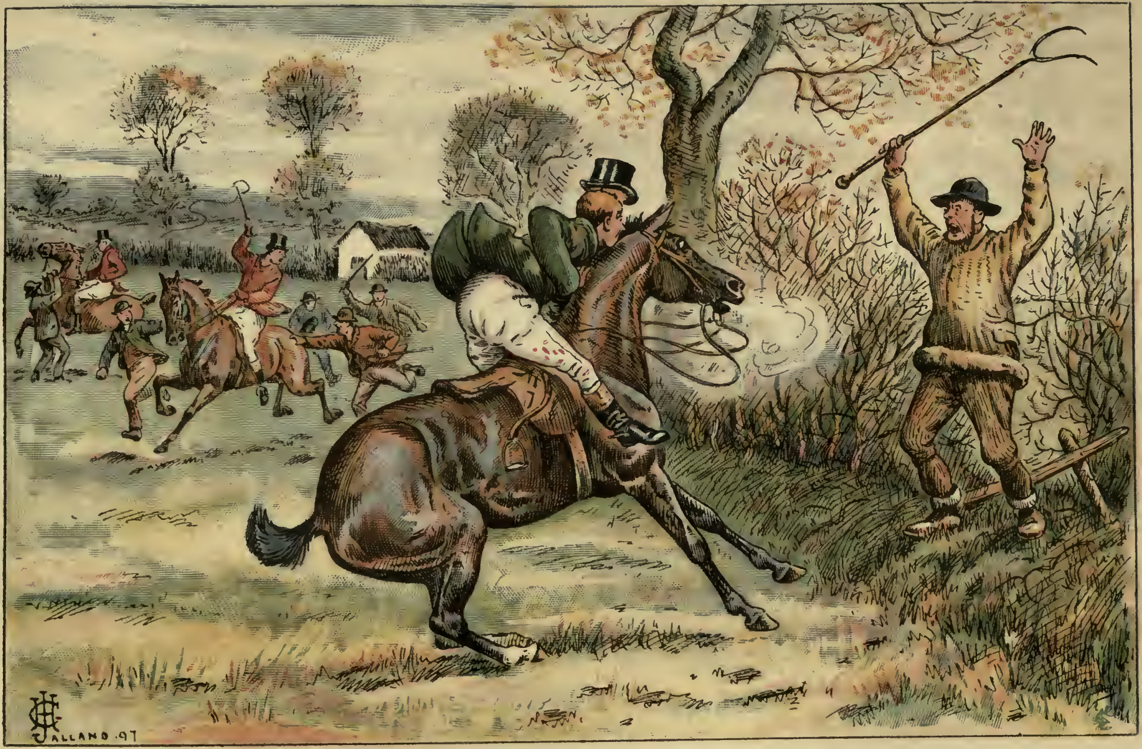
The sportsman, finding that he was decidedly likely to be on the wrong horse, then altered his tone, and coolly said, "Well, sir, if it *is* your horse, I'll take him back again;" and set off for the inn at a hand-gallop, when at that moment the hounds hit the scent, and the owner of the horse, briefly hesitating which to ride after, followed me.

It was the number of men that hunted with me that hastened the impossibility of maintaining staghounds in so populous a country; and, in addition to this, the farmers of the Harrow Vale were certainly the most untoward set of men to deal with I ever saw. In general their lands are leased to them, and the acres are the property of colleges; these tenants, therefore, are totally independent on any landlord, and, of course, there are no reservations as to sporting. It is the fashion for one class of politicians to say, that if we had more leases we should have better farming; but, if we are to judge by the way the majority of the Harrow farmers farm their land, those politicians are egregiously in error. The principal produce of these heavy clay soils is hay; and the land in winter is so wet and so badly drained that, in the state in which it was when I hunted over it, it would not carry sheep. The grass and the absence of sheep made it the finest possible ground for holding a scent; at the same time I have no hesitation in saying that it was the deepest country I ever crossed with hounds. I speak the exact truth in declaring, that, after a frost, with a wet thaw set in, I have met with a nice *green looking*, even grass field, in which, when the horse landed, he could make but a trot. The depth of the ground made the fences large, otherwise, take the chief of the Harrow Vale, the hedges are fair enough, and no double ditches. When the hounds ran towards Barnet, then, on the drier undulations of the vale, where there are oxen, the fences became severer, and the weak places in them usually strengthened with a rail. I have often wondered that, so near the London market, and with such facilities for manure, as well as intercourse with enlightened people, the farmers near Harrow were not more civilised and better agriculturists; but in their case, as in some few others, it seems as if improvement and progress had sprung from London with a hop, step, and jump over their heads, and alighted again in Hertfordshire. These people are no sportsmen, their houses and yards do not resemble jolly farms, and, as to the nurture within and without, a pig might be, *with some of them*, their parlour boarder. Exceptions prove the rule; of course there are some very worthy men among them.

When the hounds crossed the Harrow country, the gentlemen with me were often hunted as well as hunting, and frequent assaults took place. In those days I did not care much for any personal interruption, but the farmers adopted a nasty plan of serving me, in the first place, with a notice not to trespass, and then, estimating among themselves the amount of damage, "Pay us," they said, "or stand an action at law." I remember riding over to one of their houses, and pointing out to them the exorbitant nature of their demand, at the same time showing that, for a quarter of their charge, I could hire a man or men to tread in every horse-print on the land, and at the same time purchase stakes and thorns to mend the gaps. The ridiculous reply to this was, "that treading in the steps of the horses would not suffice; each footstep must be filled in with a composition of manure and mould." I had nothing left for it but to pay, or the country would have been closed against us. To take the burthen off my shoulders, the gentlemen who hunted with me raised a public fund for damage. Kindly intended as it was, it only made matters ten times worse; for then all those who, out of consideration for me individually, refrained from complaining, at once made a rush at the public money, and the whole line of country after a run sent in its bill. The farmers also adopted another plan of catching any gentleman they could come up with, and making them pay for their liberty. Horses were pounded, and gentlemen have sat on the rails bargaining for their freedom. The late Mr. Fermor, as quiet and good-natured a soul as ever hunted, was riding the line as usual—he never rode hard in my remembrance—in a very good run over the Harrow Vale, and, according to custom, was the last in the field. His person had become known to the farmers in the vicinity which we were passing, and, the moment he came over the gap in the fence that the craners and line riders of a large field had made, the farmer stuck his fork into a bush and altered the look of the gap; at the same time that he did this, one of his men either stopped all egress to Mr. Fermor with another bush, or stood there to prevent his going. The farmer and two or three other persons then began to chase their foe round the field. Headed at the gap to go out by, Fermor returned to the place whereat he had entered, but, with a bush stuck up in it, did not know it again, and away he went, coasting the ditch, and dipped at here and there by the farmers as we see small birds dipping at a hawk. The chase continued some time, the farmer growing black in the face with rage and giddiness at the enemy's recalcitrations and caged-squirrel-like evolutions, which really cut up the meadow twice as much as the flight of horsemen that had passed had done. At last Fermor was obliged to surrender and pay a crown for his liberty.

The best fun I ever saw was when the late Mr. Charles Tollemache was chased by a farmer and his men in a small meadow in the same country. If anything thwarted him, Mr. Tollemache was very irate, and he was furious at the idea of being caught or handled. My brother Moreton, and myself, and my friend Tollemache were together. As usual, the run of the farmer and his men was not made at us, but they made a dash at Mr. Tollemache in the corner of the field, and put Radical to his speed to bear his master scatheless. The very instant that Tollemache found that he was a little (though safely) ahead of his pursuers, he restrained Radical sufficiently to let him fire a volley of angry words. The last thing the farmer said was something regarding the damage Tollemache was doing, calling to him at the same time to stop. "Damage!" shouted Tollemache, "stop! you be d—d! who'd stop, d'ye think, on such a boggy place as this? Damage! you can't hurt a swamp: grass! there's none. Get your drain-plough, open your ditches, spud the weeds, choke the wireworms, hang the moles, sow clover and be d—d to you! Rot a sheep indeed! you'd starve a spider." And away Radical flew, throwing the clay behind him into the face of the bewildered enemy.

The horse of a young farmer named Passingham, who lived at Heston, was one day knocked down by a labourer with a dung-fork, just as the chestnut mare landed over a fence in the Harrow Vale. Speaking of young Passingham—both he and his father are dead—I saw the following occurrence, in a narrow bridle-way, in the midst of his father's farm. We had entered



"In the Harrow country."

G. H. Jalland.

Facing p. 52.

about twenty yards into the bridle-way, from a place called Tentlow Lane, when Passingham discovered his father at the other end, coming on foot to meet us. The instant he saw him he stuck the spurs into his mare, and shrieking all manner of cries, rode right at the old man, who, seeing a horse almost on him, had nothing left for it but to tumble into the ditch, by which alone he could escape being ridden over. His son passed him in terrific guise, and on reaching the other end of the bridle-way, was round the corner and out of sight in an instant. On my coming to the spot, the old man was apostrophising "madmen" in general, and using a favourite word of his own manufacture, which always did duty for an oath: "Tarnation seize the warmint! if I only knew what feller that was, I'd sarve him out, that I would." Having said all I could that was civil to him, I also proceeded on my way into Heston Field. George Passingham rejoined us ere long, and, on my asking him why on earth he had charged the old man, and risked killing him, he replied, using a favourite expression of his, "Charged him, my eye! kill him, no, no; I knowed there was no chance of that. Ha! ha! ha! didn't the governor cut into the ditch! My eye! 'twas the only way to do it, to put him into such a tarnation funk that he wouldn't recognise me! He don't like my hunting on market-days, mun; and as I ought to have been at Brentford, 'twouldn't do for the guv'nor to see me here along with you."

Poor young Passingham! he, I believe without intending it, was very obtrusive and pert in his manners; and one day, addressing Captain Hammersley, who was hunting with us from Hounslow Barracks, on his nice little brown horse Claret, he said, "My eye! Hammersley, you've been in the dirt and almost scratched your nose off." To this the Captain haughtily replied in strong Hibernian accent, "By Jasus, Mistre Passingham, I never allow any won to spake familiarly to me, who has not been properly introduced."

Passingham said nothing at the time, but he bottled up the fierce reproof for a future occasion, and I believe thought of it and dreamed of it for weeks. The future day at length came, and intently had Passingham watched for it. We had had a fast thing, and Claret had carried his master much to his satisfaction. In the open-hearted good-humour of the moment, Hammersley exclaimed to Passingham, "By the Lord, Passingham, that was a sharp thing!" The young farmer drew himself up with an assumption of great dignity, and sticking out his leg and bending it at the knee in a peculiar way of his own, so as to reverse the action of the joint, and give the limb the shape of a bird's leg, "My eye!" he cried, "I never allows no one to call me by my name without a mister to it, unless he's been properly interdooced!" We all of us burst out laughing, save Captain Hammersley, who twirled the ends of his immense moustache, and, as he turned away, muttered the words, "cursed puppy!"

At the close of a very good run with a powerful stag, and while I was endeavouring to secure him, the deer, with all the hounds at his haunches, trotted down the footpath, not far from Shepherd's Bush, on the Uxbridge road, in front of some cottages. To my astonishment, I saw an oldish man emerge from his house and walk along the path to meet the stag, with an outstretched hand, as if he had been going to catch a carthorse by the forelock, or a donkey by the ear. I called to him to get out of the way, but the noise the hounds made, I suppose, drowned what I said, and he met the deer as I describe. The deer plunged at him, and took him right in the pit of the stomach. The old man fell as if he were shot, and lay on his back like a corpse by the side of what I afterwards found were his garden rails, and into which garden hounds and stag entered. I was off my horse, and about to grapple with the stag, when heavy blows mingled with the yells of hounds made me look round, and I saw a young man livid with rage, with one leg, supporting himself on one crutch, while, sledge-hammer like, with the other he felled every hound he could get near. He had not his wooden leg on, so I wrenched the crutch from him on which he leaned; but, to my surprise, he commenced a series of quick and violent hoppings, laying about him still. I had nothing left for it but to secure the other crutch and let him softly down. The deer taken, and the elderly man, who proved to be the father of the cripple, having caught his wind, of which for a time only the stag had deprived him, I reasoned with them on their folly, and the poor fellow, now restored to his crutches, assured me that the cause of his violence was that he thought his father had been killed. I gave them some silver, and we parted good friends. Another instance worth remarking occurred at Lady Mary Hussey's, who lived near Hillingdon. A stag, quite fresh, and of whom the hounds had suddenly obtained a view, came tearing along under the garden wall, among the shrubs, till he found himself in contact with one side of a bay window: through this he went, with two or three hounds each side of him; and instead of going out at the other side of the window, he turned, and ran to the further end of the drawing-room, in which I believe Lady Mary Hussey and other ladies were seated. It was enough to have scared a man, and this sudden crash and furious apparition of course had a startling effect on the ladies. Seeing the mischief to the window, I was off my horse immediately, cap in hand, to make a thousand apologies; but my first act was to get the stag out, and prevent further damage. On entering the drawing-room, alas! I found the line lay through a conservatory; but when I gained the locality of the stag, the following scene presented itself. The stag, wet and bloody from a few (not serious) scratches by the glass, had his muddy haunches against, and plastering, the wainscot, while occasionally he rubbed his antlers, to keep them in a condition for war, on a mahogany table, making considerable ditches in it, while at the same time whenever two or three hounds, who were baying him from beneath the sofas and chairs, approached too near, he made furious dashes at them, upsetting everything in his way. On one side of the room, and staring over the top of it, was a servant, or one of my field, I forget which, behind some ancestral portrait, with the face of the picture to the stag, which he had taken down to serve as a shield, while the window-frame had been driven in with such force, that, as it stood, there was no getting the deer out that way. In the midst of it all, and expecting more hounds in at the window, unless my brother and Henry Wombwell were quick in getting them away, I was almost at my wits' end; however, calling on the spectator who was parading the picture, for heaven's sake, at least, to turn it the other way, or the first thing the ancestral countenance would have would be the horns of the stag through it, in motion as the bearer kept it, I caught the hounds and led them out. The stag being quiet, and having sent all sorts of apologies up to Lady Mary, I reported that the state of the window would not admit of the stag's egress, unless I was permitted to enlarge the aperture, while, at the same time, fresh and powerful as the stag was, it would be dangerous to attempt to lead him through the conservatory. The reply to my apologies and to this report was the best-natured and kind that could be. She said "she did not in the least care for the accident, that I could not help it, and, if necessary, I was to enlarge the fracture in the window as much as I pleased," the only stipulation being that, "when the stag regained his liberty, the hounds were to be laid on on the lawn, that she might see them running." Having returned to the scene of action and disengaged my sporting friend from the ancestral picture, and placed it in safety, we knocked away the stanchions of the window sufficiently to let the deer through, and having borrowed a door from the offices by way of more fitting shield, I got the stag out, and laid the hounds on at the window.

The chase, particularly when a deer, by being housed, had learned there was safety in it, frequently ended in mansions, cottages, or barns, and I cannot help saying that, in almost every instance, I met with the greatest good-nature. On one of these occasions we ran up to the entrance of a gentleman's kitchen, in the rear of his premises, and the hounds bayed at the closed door. Heads of domestics through the pantry window informed me that the stag was in the house, and that they would admit me "if I would keep the dogs out, as the children were afraid of them." The door being opened and closed carefully behind me, I went in, ushered by a butler, and peeped at by many maids; and, on asking where the stag was, the butler replied that he had been in all the lower offices, and when he last saw him he was going up the drawing-room stairs. On asking for the master and mistress, the man replied, "his master had gone up after the stag, and that his mistress was but poorly." The butler introduced me to the drawing-room, but neither master nor stag were in it, when at that moment a door at the other end opened, and the owner of the house came in, under visible though suppressed excitement. I began all sorts of apologies, as usual, and for a moment the gentleman was civil enough; but on my asking *where* the stag was, all restraint gave way, and in a fury he replied, "Your stag, sir, not content with walking through every office, has been here, sir, here in my drawing-room, sir, whence he proceeded upstairs to the nursery, and damn me, sir, he's now in Mrs. ——'s boudoir." All I could say was, that I was very sorry; and I asked him what I was to do. He left me in the drawing-room for a few minutes, and then called me to follow him, and the stag was in a passage at the top of a backstair. The deer got down again into the offices, where he was safely secured.

Several gallant friends of mine got into occasional rows; and in one instance, where blows passed between one of them and a person who used to hunt with my hounds, and who, it was said, kept "a hell" in "Seven Dials," and who was deficient in teeth, I remember Sir George Wombwell's saying, "My good fellow, you should not have touched that man; why he had but one tooth, and looked as if he thirsted for blood." Still, in the midst of it all, for twelve years our sport continued, and a vast deal of fun we had. Enclosure after enclosure went on, heath and common vanished, villas sprung up where gravel-pits, fish, and snipes used to be, and, instead of the decrease of man, and the place becoming so that, "on the hospitable hearth, the hare should leave her young," things were reversed: roses grew where the bulrush and reed had flourished, and babies' cries were heard on sites that in my remembrance were only waked by the prettier whistle of the plover. The spot where my father shot the highwayman on Hounslow Heath, as he went in the evening from Cranford to dine with Justice Bulstrode, whose house was within the old wall now surrounding the new church at Hounslow, became the centre almost of a town, and, in short, the whole place became peopled. All this was of course against hunting, and increased our difficulties, as the sequel will show.

# CHAPTER IV

"But mirth instead, and dimpling smiles,
And wit, that gloomy care beguiles;
And joke, and pun, and merry tale,
And toasts that round the table sail:
While laughter, bursting through the crowd
In vollies, tells our joys aloud."—SOMERVILLE.

THERE is many an amusing thing done and said in a hunting-field; and, though some of the jokes will at times be coarse, still there are many that will bear repeating. An answer from a farmer one day to Sir George Wombwell, who was looking for his second horse, was quaint.

"I say, damn it, farmer, have you seen my fellow?"

"No! upon my soul," replied the bluff agriculturist, with his hands in his breeches pockets, "I never did!"

A gallant officer, who had lost the hounds, called to a farmer in the Harrow Vale, who was standing at some little distance with a fork on his shoulder, and asked him if he knew which way the hounds were running. The farmer nodded apparently in the affirmative, and beckoned the soldier up for further news. My friend rode up, and not being on his guard, was taken prisoner, and, I believe, had to pay for his liberty. I have been told that my gallant friend Colonel Scott, of the Guards, was once seized in the Harrow Vale, and locked up in a mill, but that he made such a terrible row, and was so uneasy in his prison, that he even set the mill going, and in the confusion effected his escape without ransom. Of course, among it all I did not entirely escape molestation. A butcher's dog near the Magpies Inn caught the stag, and had got him down in a ditch by the side of the road, and on getting up to the spot, I had to descend into the ditch to choke off the dog, when of course I also gave him the whip. While doing this, in the act of stooping, I was suddenly seized, and my head forced against the bank. Out of breath as I was, I contrived to cast off the weight that was on me, and to step up into the road, when I saw my foe the butcher squaring at me as Dickens's cabman did when he offered to fight Mr. Pickwick for the shilling fare. Not a word was spoken, and I hit out, and caught the knight of the blue-frock with my right hand under the left eye. The butcher sat down, and I remounted, the deer having gone off with nothing harmed but his ear. All this I have laughed at over and over again, because not a word was said, and it all seemed such a matter of course, and a part of the day's diversion. Once again besides this, while in the act of breaking the pale of a small paddock or garden to let the hounds through, near Uxbridge, I found myself collared. On turning round to see who it was, a respectable man, my senior in years, let go of me, guessing, perhaps, from something he saw, that I was angry. I dropped my hand, therefore, and administered to him as he turned away a slight kick, mounted my horse, and soon forgot all about it. He threatened an action, however, and but for the very good-natured interference of Mr. William Norton, a coal and timber merchant of Uxbridge, might have caused me much trouble. It was curious to see the stress he laid on the way I had retaliated, seeming to be quite of the Hudibrastic opinion,

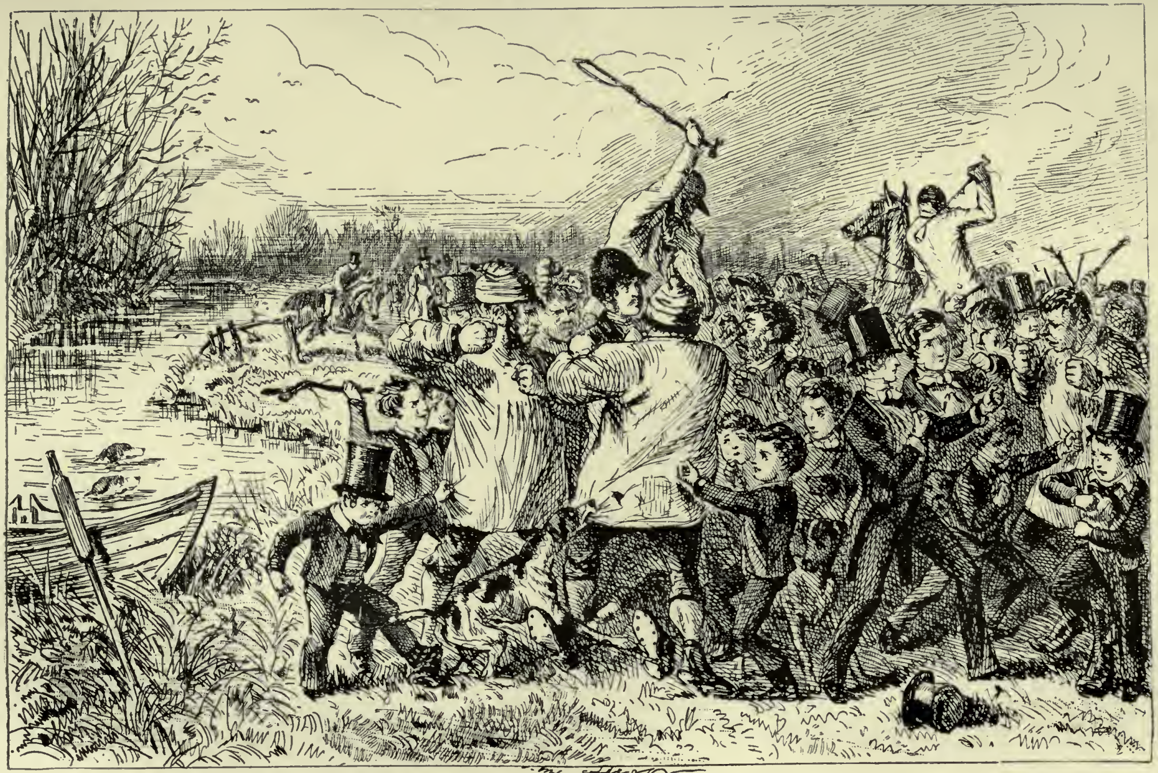
> "That a kick behind hurts honour more,
> Than many wounds laid on before,"

and assuring the mediator, that "had I struck him, he would not have minded it; but to receive a kick, slight as it was, was beyond endurance." Mr. William Norton was always out with me, and a finer or more manly man I never saw. He was ever ready to soothe the farmers, all of whom he personally knew; to stand by me if there was anything like a row; and to assist in saving the deer, by going into water, rather than that I should have to ride at a foot-pace home with my hounds in wet clothes. I liked him much, but there was an off-hand independent manner about him, which made him unpopular with many of the other gentlemen who hunted with me. So useful and so ready did he ever show himself to promote any of my interests in that hunting country, that, as a token of remembrance, I presented him with a hunting-whip, the handle of which was the representation of a stag's head in silver.

On a beautiful scenting day, we were just commencing a very fine run, crossing from the plough country over the Uxbridge Road between Hillingdon and Hayes for the Harrow Vale, when the following occurrence took place. I was on Jack-o'-Lantern, and my poor friend, one of those now no more, Colonel John Lyster, then a Captain in the Guards, was in the same field with me: everybody else had skirted that field by a lane leading in the same direction. As we crossed the field, hounds running hard, I might have been fifty yards in advance of Lyster, and, seeing the gate out of the field exactly in my line with a huge red-breeched footman standing at it, on London West-End legs, looking like a bumble bee, all red behind, I called to him to open the gate, and, as I neared it, received the reply "that he'd be d—d if he did." We had no time for delay, so I shouted to Lyster to charge the live quick hedge, amounting to a "bullfinch" as previous experience had taught me, and "to put in plenty of powder." Lyster went straight at and through the hedge, which closed behind him again, like a harlequin, and landed in a narrow green lane. I had to turn Jack for a run at it, and, from the turn of the hounds, though over last, chance put me first, and we both had to go down the lane and pass the surly footman or coachman, whichever he was. As I neared him, going then at a trot, I told him I would report his insolence to his master, whosoever he might be. "Will you?" cried the fellow, "then you shall see him now," and, seizing Jack by the curb-bridle, he pulled him up in spite of me. A blow from the double thong over his arm only had the effect of making him seize my foot, and, holding the bridle locked in his elbow, he endeavoured to throw me off the horse. To cant a man out of a saddle, if you get him by the foot and *know how to do it*, is not very difficult: this fellow might have seen it done, but was not aware of the dodge to meet it. My leg I abandoned to him, taking care not to stiffen my knee, while at the same time drawing the double thong to the crop of the whip very tight, I set to work on his of course undefended head, on which he had neither hat nor cap but a good deal of powder. A fog of powder soon arose, the colour of his hair became manifest, and of course he got a broken pate. He held on to my leg like a fool till he had received severely, and then ran away, saying he was "going for a constable." The whole of this took much less time than it does to write it, and Lyster, who had pulled up to see the end of it, and myself again went out of the lane together. In a few days' time I had notice of an action for assault from this man's attorney, when, on finding that his master backed him in it, Mr. George Hawkins sought an interview for me with him, at which he explained the fact of the servant being the first aggressor, and told the master that if he sanctioned his servant in the matter, he must give me satisfaction. The reply that he gave Mr. Hawkins was, "that he had made his money in trade, and would not fight." A defence to the action then became needful, and I called on Lyster as the only witness of the transaction to prove that the first assault had been made on me in a public lane. "My dear fellow," was the reply, "don't for Heaven's sake bring me into court, or I shall get into a devil of a row: the fact is, I ought to have been a hundred miles away with a recruiting party." A subpœna would have enforced my witness's appearance, but we were much too good friends for that, so *per force*, all idea of defence was abandoned, and I directed my solicitor to make terms if he could. A surgeon of course was found who stated that he was ready to swear that (but for his skilful treatment) the blows the man's head had received would have endangered life, and my solicitor declared he thought the matter well arranged by my giving the servant a five-pound note and paying Mr. Sawbones his bill for lotion and physic, attendance, plasters, and coloured ditchwater to be bolted by the bumble bee by way of coolers every three hours.

The vicinity of Eton was also the scene of an active shindy. The stag crossed the Thames somewhere near the cavalry barracks; and the instant he left the river between Eton and Surley Hall he was set on, ere he was well landed, by a whole host of bargemen and Eton louts, accompanied by several dogs. One dog, as he came out of the water, caught him by the nose, and on my arriving at the opposite bank of the river, whence I watched the whole proceeding, bargemen, bulldogs, and at last the hounds were worrying the deer. There was therefore no more running and, quitting my horse, a boat being at the bank, I jumped into it and pulled across. The first thing the assembly found was the "tawny coat" among them very soon attached to the hinder-leg of the bulldog who had the deer by the head, on whose back the iron hammer of the whip soon made a persuasive impression. Ere more than the second blow had fallen a sort of sledge-hammer seemed to smite me in the back, giving me a delirious impression of what some nurses do when a child falls down, and lies with nothing turned up but a silent and purple face set for tears:—they pick a child up as if the arm was a handle to the body, and then, to bring out the voice, punch it from behind. My assailant, however, on the present occasion hit everything out of me except the voice, so, rising up from among the fighting dogs and stag, on whom the bargeman's blow had sent me, I turned and knocked down a man whom I found immediately in my rear. For an instant then there was a wild scuffle, in which all the bargemen seemed to hug me as well as each other, and all I could do was to "fib" at various ribs. We were too close for the moment to hurt each other much, but it might have been a serious affair for me but for old Eton. Hurrah! then, for the Etonians. I had a glimpse of their coming up one by one, little and big; so I "sung out," as sailors say, "Eton to the rescue!" and I declare this, that from the least boy able to kick a man's shin, up to the big youth able—Heaven save the mark ! I was about to use the words of action, and say able "to punch his head ;" but I have been so condemned for using that phrase in a pamphlet on the administration of the Game Laws and combat with a restive game-stealer, that I dare not use it again—able, then, to return him to his cottage so disfigured that his mamma would refuse him admittance, there was not one Eton boy but seemed right willing to lend me a hand. What might have been the character the fray had then assumed I do not know, but at that instant the field of red-coats, as well as the "tawny" aids, came galloping up from the bridge, to which they had ridden, and every one of the bargemen then changed their tactics, and pretended to defend the deer. The deer-cart then came up, the run having been a ring, and its funny old driver John Baldwin in his tawny coat soon took the stag in charge, dreadfully torn by the bargemen's dogs, and, as it proved on subsequent examination, with a fore-leg a compound fracture.

My horse having been brought round, we were proceeding quietly home with the hounds, when in rather a solitary place, under the Home Park wall, near Datchet, I observed the deer-cart pulled up, and old John Baldwin standing on the top of it, making signs for me "to come on." I was very angry at this unusual sight, for the strict orders were never to bring the deer-cart within sight or wind of the hounds after the day was over, as it only unsettled them ; I therefore beckoned Baldwin to proceed. The sign was useless ; an order which I shouted had no more effect ; instead of quitting the roof of his cart and resuming the road, to my rage as well as astonishment, John commenced a sort of war-dance on the top of it, waving his cap and flourishing his pig-whip as a painted barbarian might be supposed to do his club, his signs for me to "come on" being still more energetic. John lived, and I believe still lives, on beer and gin, and I began to think he was drunk ; but on coming nearer I heard a voice of supplication from within the cart, accompanied occasionally by a strange rumbling bolting sound, which often cut short the man's imploring voice ; it was



*Facing page* 64.

"Eton to the Rescue!"

in fact the limited charge of the angry stag at the owner of the voice whenever he moved. On nearing the cart John drowned all other noise in the following address to me:—

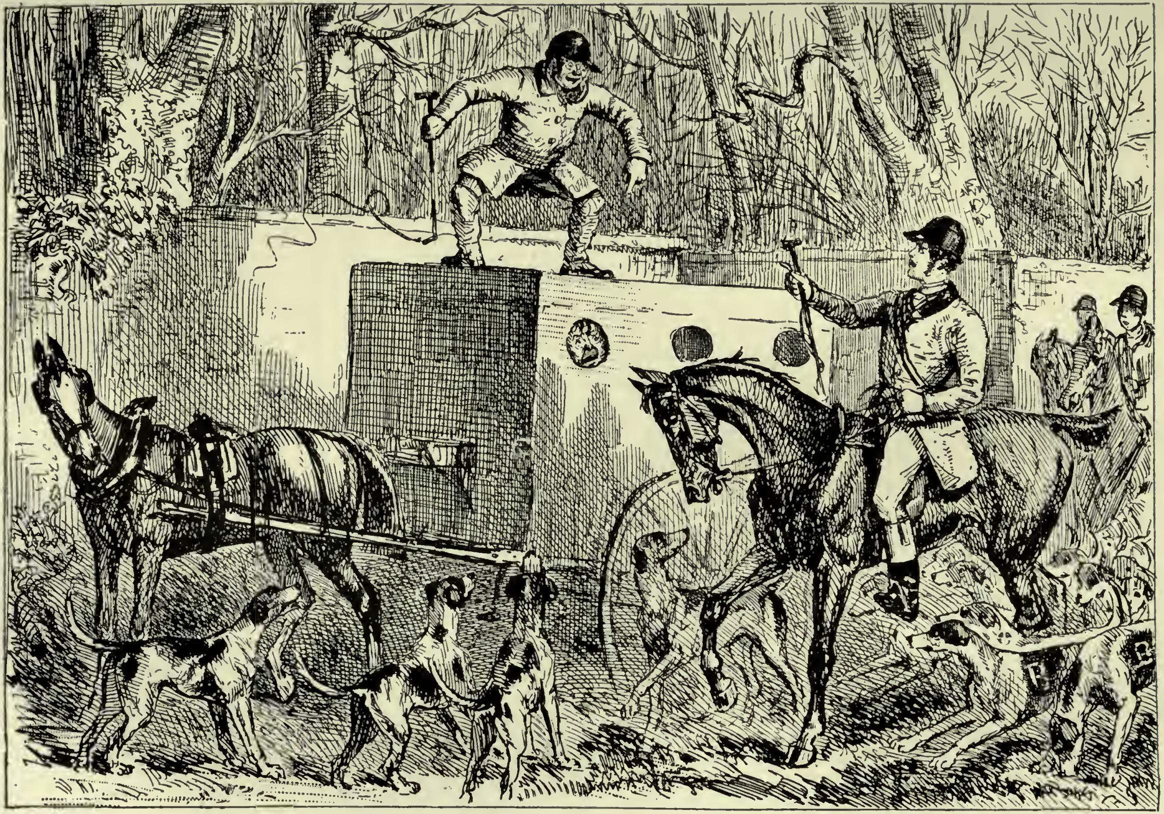
"Master! master! come on and take yer rewenge! I've heerd as you've been struck, and I've got the feller what did it. Here a is," he cried, stamping in triumph on the top of the cart, "along with the stag, and the stag's been a butting on him, terrible! I'll uncart him, and you whop 'un well."

While John made this speech, I could see the man's mouth at one of the air-holes of the cart, and hear him begging for forgiveness, and taking the most solemn oaths that he had never touched me, every now and then the staggering, bolting sound of the butting deer cutting short his sentences. Having ordered the bargeman's release, out tumbled a great stout fellow the picture of woe, inducted to the open air by John with the following words: "Come, my fine feller, it's your turn to be hunted now!"—John's face radiant with the delightful idea of the "pitching in" as he termed it, that he thought was about to take place. I looked the man over, but not having had much time to identify any of the offenders, it was impossible for me to tell whether he had struck me or not, so to John's great disappointment, who said I should "never have such a chance of rewenge again," I bid the fellow go about his business. On asking John how he got the man in, he said, "Oh! he was werry busy among 'em"; and while they were lifting the stag into the cart, this man had got in to pull at his horns, so John closed the door, and went off at speed, the jolting of the cart, and the noise made by so many people, effectually drowning the shouts of the terrified prisoner, who, John said, "kicked up a deuce of a nise, and roared at fust like mad."

While the hounds were at a check near Heston, Mr. Henry Wombwell, tawny coat and all, was assaulted by a farmer's man thus. He was sitting by the side of a fence, beyond which was a deep fall or "drop," and, I think, speaking to a hound, when all at once the man came behind him with a heavy top rail, and let it fall at him with all the impetus he could give it. Luckily for Henry Wombwell the rail fell on the croup of his horse, the old one-eyed chestnut, who was a perfect fencer, and who instantly topped the fence and disappeared with his rider on the opposite side. My brother Augustus, who was out on the before-mentioned old horse Sultan, on seeing this assault, jumped from his horse and ran towards the man, who had again assumed the heavy rail. My brother had in his hand a severe jockey whip, with which he used to ride Sultan when he got a mount on him, on account of his sluggishness,—the whip not much of a defence against the rail. It was a pretty thing to see the collected and resolute gentleman going up to this "savage man proper," as the heralds would say, who for a moment looked a fire-eating giant; and then, when my brother approached to within a few yards of him, to behold the rail thrown away, and the savage man no longer proper, but in a dastard flight. That I knew would not save him, and finding my brother gaining on him, he threw himself on the ground, in the hope of escaping punishment. At that moment the hounds hit the scent, and the last thing we saw of it was my brother standing over the man, and with the lash of the sharp hand-whip finding out the soft places afforded by the interstices of waistcoat and waistband, and knee button and legging. The fellow had his punishment, and, thanks to the able leaping of his horse, Henry Wombwell escaped without a fall.

During all this time, notices from the Harrow country kept coming in; a dinner to the farmers, suggested by Messrs. Norton and Norman of Uxbridge, coursing to all who kept or could borrow greyhounds, and shooting, with presents of game and occasionally venison, could not avert it; and I saw that the public run was in full force against the public fund my field had raised to defray all damage.

In the early part of my stag-hunting career, two of the Harrow farmers, who prided themselves on being able to shoot, I take it, presuming on my youth and their little knowledge of my brother Henry, challenged us to a match at pigeons, at the



*Facing page* 66.

Old John Baldwin and his Prisoner.

house of their friend a Mr. Harper at Greenford. We arranged the sum for which we were to shoot, shot the match, and beat them hollow. We nevertheless parted the best of friends, for they entirely forgot, and we did not ask them, to pay their stakes.

There was a man named Baker, close under Harrow-on-the-Hill, who had made himself very busy against me; and, as money was needful to him, he was one who, by notice to me, was prepared to have his share. I knew his land and avoided it, but at the end of a fine run the stag made an unfortunate selection, crossed his fields, and, with the hounds at his haunches, entered his farmyard and ran into his barn. Having avoided his fields, a parallel lane led me up to the gate of his farmyard before any one else, and I saw hounds and deer all rush into the barn together. To save the deer I left my horse at the gate, and reached the barn-door just as three labourers were about to put a lock into the staple and lock up deer and hounds, who already had pulled the stag down, as the deer's cries testified, and to my idea were about killing him. I had but just time to thrust my fingers into the staple to prevent the lock going in, and then, with my back to the door, I begged the men to let me save the life of the stag, and assured them if they did so I would pay all damage. A brutal reply was all that this appeal elicited; and one of them, a very powerful man, seizing my arm, endeavoured to force the lock through or between my fingers; on this, as he hurt me considerably, I struck him over the wrist with my fist in an endeavour to knock his hold off, when he drew back and hit left and right at my face. I was close to the barn-door, my hand fixed in the staple, and very little room given me to give way; but, bad judges of distance as these fellows usually are, his left hand never reached me, and his right only struck the peak of my hunting cap, which, however, it knocked off over my face, and the cap gave me a bloody nose. The other fellows also showed fight, so I withdrew my hand from the staple, returned the blow on the arm of the man who struck me, with the heavy iron hammer of my whip, and kept them at bay. Just then the field arrived at the gate, and I called out, "Gentlemen, will you sit by and see this?" In an instant such a lot of goodly legs flew over their horses' manes as made it evident to me there was no lack of help, and in another moment Mr. George Hawkins, Mr. William Norton of Uxbridge, Mr. Baring, and, though last not least, Mr. Gulley, sometime member for Pontefract, were with me. There were many others equally ready and resolute, but my memory does not serve me after such a lapse of time with their names. I assure them that they are not intentionally omitted. When my assistants arrived at the barn-door, to my infinite amusement I saw a huge ruffian, the one who had struck at me, squaring at Mr. Gulley and threatening to strike him; the latter simply collected himself, and drawing his hands together on his chest, said in a calm but ominous tone, "You'd better not." So thought the countryman, or some sort of instinct came to his rescue, for, turning quickly away, he sought some other foe in the mêlée which had then commenced. There seemed to be among those barn-savages—for to distinguish them from honest labourers I can call them nothing else—much indecision as to whether they should attempt to defend the barn from being opened, or whether they had better get in and, arming themselves with corn-shovels and forks, defend the barn over the foot-board, or whatsoever they call the board that goes across the entrance when the doors are open. At all events, among red coats, dark coats, and smock-frocks, the doors came open, and the countrymen slipped in and armed themselves, when, as they had been joined by others, the entrance to the barn was quite filled by the opposing ranks of the besiegers and the besieged. The first thing I saw was the seizure of a pitchfork by George Hawkins, who had stuck his glass into his eye to look well for it, but when he had made up his mind, in case of a blow, let it fall from his eye again. His was no slight grasp, and in vain the huge labourer tugged to get his weapon free. The next thing that came out of the barn was a labourer on to the handle of a fork, but dragged forth on his back among the manure; then a corn-shovel or a spade was captured; and then all the barn-savages went down one way or the other together, and we all went into the barn over them. During this scuffle not a blow was struck; I heard Mr. Gulley keeping all inclination to unnecessary violence down; and the most extraordinary part of it is, that by getting into a corner the deer had defended himself from the hounds, and, though much bitten, we saved his life. The only blow struck throughout this business was when one of the fellows hit at me, and I returned it on his arm. The latter was admitted in evidence, by the man's swearing to the fact, and stating that the blow he so received in return for a period incapacitated him from work. Never was there a more brutal attempt made by a set of savages to get an unfortunate animal, which had fled into their barn for safety, torn in pieces. The upshot of this was so ridiculous a demand for money, that all compromise was out of the question, and the man Baker commenced his action against me for trespass and assault in the Court of Queen's Bench, Scarlett for the plaintiff and Brougham for the defence. It struck me at once that I had an indifferent jury, for they regarded Mr. Scarlett's rather jolly-looking countenance and comfortable figure, as a bird might be supposed to rejoice over one of his feather, with smiling complacency; but when they looked on Brougham, it was with an evident shake of the head, as if each juryman had said, "No, no, my boy, *you* an't going to wile the wits out of us with your eloquence; it's Scarlett as tells the truth." Called for the jury was one of the Messrs. Gunter, who always used to hunt with me, and whom, with his brother I think, to whom Lord Alvanley gave the advice of "icing his horse," I was always delighted to see with my hounds, and to him the complainant instantly objected, some of his party basely insinuating that Mr. Gunter looked in his white greatcoat *unusually stout*, that he never seemed so large before, or behind either, and that they were sure he had a plum-cake in each of his greatcoat pockets, resolved, they said, to stand any length of locking up, rather, I suppose, than join in a verdict against his conscience. Gunter objected to, the jury was then sworn, and so fascinated were they with

Mr. Scarlett's appearance, that from me "hope withering fled, and mercy sighed farewell." The trial proceeded, affording as much amusement to a large audience as any theatrical farce. The boors who appeared in support of the allegation were superbly ignorant and highly uncouth, and their cross-examination by Brougham was beautiful! The fellow who struck me, a sort of "near London giant"—I can't liken him to the straightforward labourer of more rural districts,—having been very confused in his evidence, as well as contradictory, was asked by Brougham, on his delaying to answer a question, "Come, sir, perhaps you can tell the jury while this was passing whether you stood on your head or your heels?" The man hesitated to answer this, and, after scratching his head vigorously, replied, to the infinite amusement of the court, "that a didn't know." Brougham said, "I thought so"; Lord Tenterden put aside his pen and stared at the witness, and Brougham I think sat down. Now, though this seemed the reply of an idiot, or a man so confused that he did not know what he was saying, in justice to all parties I must declare that the man was actually on his head or his back a great part of the time, and *not* on his heels; for he was one of those dragged over the sill of the barn-door, and, because he would not let go his fork or shovel, he was detained on his back among the manure, as a sort of place whence he could achieve no harm; he had, therefore, a valid reason to hesitate, as well as for the reply which he rendered in his cross-examination. Witness after witness for the prosecution afforded amusement to the court on account of their size and stolid stupidity, and I remember Sir George Seymour whispering to me "that we seemed to have forgathered with a race of giants." One of my witnesses, who had volunteered his testimony, and which fact had become known to Mr. Scarlett, caught it severely. This was Mr. Cauty, the auctioneer. Mr. Scarlett, having obtained the admission that he had recently volunteered an appearance in my favour, as he could tell no more than any one else, told the jury "he could not account for the fact of his learned friend's having placed that witness before them (looking full at Mr. Cauty's hair, which was red), unless indeed it was in an attempt to give *a colour to the defence!*"

There was a man named Hook, who, by some inexplicable error in my solicitor, Mr. Clarke of Craven Street, was put up as a witness for the defence—we had plenty of sensible men to offer in his stead—who afforded considerable amusement. This man, though I had not spoken to him twenty times in my life, would always call me by my Christian name alone. Mr. Scarlett said, "You seem very familiar with Mr. Berkeley," and he said he was. Mr. Baring was examined, but Scarlett declined to cross-examine him; and Mr. William Norton produced the large pocket-book he used in his trade—on the day in question he carried it in his breast coat pocket—and which, luckily, received and stopped the point of a pitchfork, and perhaps saved his life. Mr. Scarlett, in his speech to the jury, coupled me, of course, with Berkeley Castle and the riches of Colonel Berkeley, and endeavoured to make his lucid (!) listeners believe that I was, or might be, the owner of those domains; and Brougham, in his reply, had to assure them that a ghost had been trumped up by his learned friend, with a view to their deception, and that I had no more to do with the castle and its riches than the Man in the Moon. However, the jury continued to smile on Mr. Scarlett, and to nod their heads on all his periods, as listeners at an opera do to each cadence of their favourite airs, while they cast sidelong glances at Brougham, as if they thought—

> "There was a laughing devil in his sneer,
> That raised emotions both of rage and fear."

In the end Lord Tenterden summed up with great partiality for the complainant's case, for which, soon after, I most religiously caricatured him in my album or sketch-book; and the jury gave, if I remember rightly, a sum above that at which the damage was laid, amounting to a hundred pounds.

These, and such persecutions and prosecutions as these, with the increase of cultivation and building—railways had not then begun—made it very evident to me that, if I kept hounds, it must no longer be in my father's country. I had held it as long as a man could hold it under the influence of old associations, and I felt convinced that the thing, as far as comfort went, was at an end. It takes a man some time to break through old associations, and to leave the vicinity of long-known friends, and it went to my heart to quit Cranford; however, having for some time become what the world calls "settled in life"—it's a funny term, and not always an apt one, for my observation goes to show that marriage more frequently unsettles than settles, a not very unlikely fact when two opinions rule instead of one—having become settled, as the saying is, and not so fond of balls and parties as I used to be, though still very fond of society, I came to the determination of keeping foxhounds; the farther from London and the wilder the country the better. No country at first offered, but one day, in London, in conversation with Lord Clanwilliam, he told me that the present Duke of Bedford, at that time Lord Tavistock, had ceased to keep the Oakley hounds, and that at present there was a vacancy. At my request Lord Clanwilliam spoke to Lord Tavistock, and at last I arrived at the following facts. There had been a difference in Bedfordshire between Lord Tavistock and what was called the Oakley Club, and when his lordship declared that he would hunt the country no longer, and that he would sell his hounds, the Oakley Club denied his right to sell them, and seemed inclined to dictate in the matter. Lord Tavistock soon vindicated his absolute possession of the pack by selling them; and when I heard of the vacancy, the Oakley Club were sulking at the assertion of his lordship's just prerogative, and the landed interest of the county, from the Duke of Bedford down to the smallest landed proprietor, over whose covers I subsequently presided, viewed with dislike a great deal that they had seen, and still saw, in the conduct of the Oakley Club.

This was an unsatisfactory state of things to a man seeking peace and pleasure, and needing good fellowship among all to raise him a subscription; but, nevertheless, my heart was set on a fox-hunting country. I liked what I heard of the lands of Bedfordshire, and, as spring was approaching, I applied to take it, and in the first place communicated with Lord Tavistock. The reply I received from him then was, that all he could give me, under existing circumstances, was full permission to hunt the Duke of Bedford's woods. I accepted that as a beginning, and then applied to Lord Ludlow, the Duke of Manchester, Lord St. John, Mr. Orlebar, and all the rest of the proprietors. The generality of the replies were satisfactory, and I then was put into communication with the secretary of the Oakley Club, Mr. Samuel Whitbread. With him I entered into negotiations for a subscription of an annual thousand pounds for two seasons; but on referring that sum to Colonel Berkeley, he thought it too little for four days a week, and I applied to Mr. Whitbread for more. He met this application by an assertion, "that the Club paid the earth-stopping and feed the keepers"; and on re-consulting Colonel Berkeley, and from my own knowledge of his country, I deemed that, in all probability, the earth-stopping would amount to three or four hundred a year more, so, on that supposition, I took the country. There was but one earth in the country, that I could find, that needed an earth-stopper, and I should say that the sum of five shillings, and a dinner to sundry gamekeepers, was all that the Club was called on to disburse: that earth at Chillington I effectually effaced. The foxes throughout the country were stump-bred, and all the better for it.

I was scarce thirty years of age when I succeeded to the Bedfordshire country, and the hunting the fox, as a huntsman, was so novel to me, and the distance from London, fifty miles, so delightful, that like a man who had been confined to a crowded city, I longed for wilder scenes and a wilder game, and rejoiced in my first visit to the shire. The good Swan Inn, then kept by that able functionary, Mr. Higgins, a name with which that vicinity abounds, probably the same as all others, received me, and I proceeded to look out for a residence. While in search of a house I was attacked by the measles, and confined to my bed at the inn, but the kind as well as clever attentions of my medical adviser, Mr. Short, soon restored me to health, and I succeeded in taking Harrold Hall, pleasantly situated on the river Ouse, and in the very midst of my cub-hunting woodland. What a splendid woodland I thought it, and think it so still! From Salsey Forest, through Yardley Chase, to Snelson, Lavenden, the Harrold and Odell woods, on by Puddington Hayes, Colworth, Knotting Fox, Melchbourne, Swineshead, and Kimbolton, I should think was in its varied line not much under seventeen miles of magnificent forest, chase, and woodland, with but an intervention of a few fields; the stock of foxes ample, and much of it good scenting ground. On settling to take Harrold Hall, and the shooting and pike-fishing that belonged to it, I at once appointed a keeper to preserve foxes and game, laid out a kennel to be made from the farm-buildings and sheds at Harrold, and then returned to Cranford to form my pack and prepare for a final departure. My hounds that I used for stag were all clear-bred foxhounds of the best blood, and of the best size for work, neither too large nor too small, and every hound as much attached to me as a parlour dog. The seventeen couples of them which I selected, I well knew had no fault, and would run a fox, at my bidding, as steady from hare and fallow deer as any foxhounds in the world, if I could put them on the fox's line. This was but a small foundation on which to build a pack for four days a week, in a tremendously heavy woodland, resolved as I was to raise it to sixty or seventy couples; and I determined to seek aid from masters of hounds, with whom I was personally acquainted. I therefore applied to them for any old, crippled, or almost worn-out hounds, who were drafted on account of misfortune or years, and not for any fault; by this means to avoid the importation at least of vice; the complement of hounds to be thereafter filled up by unentered puppies. Cub-hunting in the Oakley or Bedfordshire country had, from time immemorial, commenced in the first week in July, the stump-bred foxes by that time knowing as much country as an earth-bred one does in October; and with the space for entry so afforded, I hoped at least to have something like a pack to work with by the first week in November. A body of hounds were soon collected at the Cranford kennel: Colonel Wyndham, Sir John Cope, and others, gave me old hounds, or I purchased drafted young ones. The Vine also contributed to me, and so did Lord Lonsdale. I also got, but I forget where I got them, a hound named Proctor, and one called Stamford, with Sir Richard Sutton's mark on the former, and I think on the latter. Proctor had been evidently drafted from unsound action, and Stamford from old age; but they were useful to me from the splendid way in which they both drew. Old Stamford's soft and prolonged note, when he found a fox, sweeps by my ear now; and often and often had I to cheer the young ones to him throughout my first fox-hunting season. What he must have been in his youth—I am speaking of the years '29 or '30,—I can easily guess; and if these pages meet the eye of the gentleman who bred him, he will accept this tribute to the memory of as gallant, as sensible, and as attached and faithful a hound as ever killed a fox. I am not quite sure that Stamford had the "S" branded on his side; but the mark, though scarred, looked very like it. I shall never forget how proud that old hound was when he found I petted him, and that he was still to be treated with all the ceremony and usages of a well-ordered fox-hound kennel; and when we began cub-hunting, his alert dignity and industry was so great that he still more won my heart. Among my old hounds were one or two who would not draw; and these at first were seduced into cover by the tongue of riot among the young hounds; they soon, however, distinguished truth from error, and the babbler from the never-failing speaker; old Stamford's challenge would make them dash away from my horse's heels; and at last, when the other hounds began to draw and find a fox, old Voucher, a grey-pied hound, I think from Colonel Wyndham, would listen a moment with a curious ear, and head that turned from side to side till he satisfied himself as to whose tongue it was; and I could either cheer or gently chide according to what old Voucher did. My entry of puppies from the kennel at Berkeley Castle, Colonel Berkeley giving me first choice of the lot after he had made his selection, joined me after my pack had reached Harrold.

## CHAPTER V

"The whiles up-gazing still,
Our menials eye our steepy way,
Marvelling, perchance, what whim can stay
Our steps when eve is sinking grey
On this gigantic hill.
So think the vulgar—life and time
Ring all their joys in one dull chime
Of luxury and ease."—Scott.

Having got together the hounds at Cranford, I set off to take up my permanent residence at Harrold, and to hasten the completion of the kennel. What a freshness there seemed in all around me! the river Ouse, at the foot of my lawn, swept swiftly past over the shallows through its green meadows; and when I rode by the woods, or walked in those attached to Harrold Hall, with my gun on my shoulder and Smoker behind me, it seemed as if I were in a wilderness of wild animals, not again to be thwarted, either by the follies, avarice, or ill-temper of captious men. As the growth of population had driven Lord Berkeley, his hounds, and "his thirty huntsmen in tawny coats," from his kennel and country at the village of Charing, so had that same tide of human beings gradually surrounded the manors of Cranford, Cranford-le-Motte, and Cranford St. John, and Harlington-cum-Shippeston, and the site of a preceptory of Knights Templar, and sent me farther from its high-water mark, a mark that every hour renders more uncertain. When in those beautiful and solitary Harrold and Odell woods in the early summer, it was marvellous to see the quantity of winged vermin flying from wood to wood, or soaring in the air: kites, buzzard hawks, that worst of all winged vermin the sparrow-hawk, kestrels, hobbys, carrion crows, ravens, magpies, and jays, were passing every moment, and I saw a fund of useful amusement in destroying them and preserving what few heads of game there were till hunting commenced. How a head of game contrived to exist with the fine show of foxes I found there, combined with the smaller vermin, I can scarcely comprehend, for there were not three rabbits in the whole place for them to feed on. The farmers' hen-roosts from the foxes, and their broods of chickens, young ducks, and eggs from other vermin, suffered in proportion. The most extraordinary amount of damage was done by the jays; along the headlands abutting the great woods, the ears of wheat over acre after acre were cut from the stalk at the top and carried clean off, so that it really looked as if the wheat-stalks had been cleanly clipped as they stood by a scissors. On seeing this amount of vermin and these depredations, which the farmers complained not of, because the jays had no responsible owner, I beheld before me not only an amusement in killing them, but also, as I thought, a means of being serviceable to the tenantry; so, rising by seven in the morning to inspect the progress of the kennel, the whole day found me given to the woods, returning perhaps in time for a few casts with the net, to catch a dish of white fish for dinner.

I soon taught my keeper, William Savage, new and sharper ideas, giving him to understand that when he came to report to me that he had seen a marten cat,[1] stoat, or weasel, he was not to drawl it out as a misfortune of no moment, but to tell me of it in a breathless state of anxiety for their destruction, and that he was to pursue all the lesser vermin, winged and four-footed, with an unrelenting hate; while, at the same time, he transferred whatever love he bore to his wife and children, to the vixen fox, her cubs, the pheasant, the partridge, and the hare. Rabbits for the present were to be tolerated to a certain extent, and, therefore, he was to let his gun off at nothing but the lesser vermin. Then came a host of steel traps of various sizes, the use of which I taught him. The false nest with the egg-shells from the kitchen, the unbroken side of the egg-shell turned uppermost, and three or four put in a nest against the butt of a tree; a small trap set about four inches from it, with twigs on either side the nest, to guide the vermin over the trap, was the first snare in requisition. Winged vermin never pitch at once on the nest the eggs of which they intend to suck, but alight on the ground a yard from it, and then walk or hop up; a few thorny twigs to fence either side the nest, and to leave open no other passage than that over the trap, ensures a capture. When this trap is used among a large head of pheasants, it should be set on broad pollard trees, or stumps of trees, natural or artificial, or on wattled hedges made capable of holding it; for, if on the ground, young hen pheasants will sometimes get caught in an inclination to lay to the eggs. In these egg-traps I have taken the honey-buzzard hawk,[1] magpies, jays, and carrion crows; and rooks, who more or less are guilty of sucking eggs, very frequently get into them,—occasionally a stoat, and once an old vixen marten cat. In a fox-hunting country, the smallest rat-trap should be the engine, incapable of holding or injuring a fox, in case, by any accident, he should come to it.

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[1] It must be many years since the pine marten (*Mustela martes*) disappeared from these woods. Were it not that the author was such a close observer of nature, one would suspect that the allusion here is to the pole-cat (*Mustela putorius*), now almost as rare as the marten. But the allusion on the following page seems to leave no doubt in the matter.—Ed.

On taking a jay, the prisoner should be carried to some ambush in the woods, the gunner selecting a good place to hide, with a large tree within distance, some of the top limbs of which are bare. The jay, which is a very garrulous bird, held by the wings in the left hand, need only to be blown at by the human face divine, to be set off in a furious state of screeching;[1] and all winged vermin who hear him, under the supposition that he is mobbing an owl, or attacked by something, or that some vermin has got hold of him, will come in an excited state to mob the one offender or the other; and I have had ten vermin down to the gun at one spot before I thought of leaving off. Magpies so taken occasionally will scream, and so will carrion crows and rooks, but very rarely, their nature being much more sullen; a jay is infinitely the best decoy bird. When I first came to Harrold, I could mimic the jay and crow sufficiently to call others around me; but at last they were so down upon that dodge, that I had only to be heard to set what few there were in full retreat. The next trap I put down was "the stone trap," or false drain at the end of a ditch, where hedges led into the woods. This trap is roughly built with stones, bricks, or turf, about a yard long, and an entrance at either end, large enough to admit a polecat, but nothing larger, and a small rat-trap set in the middle of it, the way through being so narrow that nothing can pass without being caught. The advantage of this trap is, that it requires no bait, and can catch nothing but a vermin, or a young rabbit. The next trap to this was a "dead fall," made of any old wood, the rougher the better, and set on a bank, or under a bank or wall; it has two sides to it like a common box or hutch-trap, and sets with a lever, button, and bridge like the hutch-trap, only, instead of catching alive, the roof of the trap, made of a heavy log of wood, or the roof, weighted with stones, falls in and crushes whatever is beneath it. This trap can be made large enough to kill a dog or cat; but in a fox-hunting country, of a size only to kill the lesser vermin.

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[1] This bird (*Pernis apivora*) is neither a buzzard nor a hawk, but the type of a separate group, the *Perninæ*. It visits the South of England every year in order to breed, but seldom is permitted to do so, as it is supposed to be destructive to game. This, however, is a deplorable delusion. Its favourite food consists of wasps and bees; but it also devours other insects, mice and a few small birds. It is said even to eat berries and small fruit in autumn.—Ed.

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[1] An abominable piece of cruelty, which I should like to omit from the book altogether. People destroy the beautiful jays, and leave alone the ugly jackdaws, which are just as mischievous, and, on our coasts, are in a fair way of extirpating the gentle chough. Let both jays and jackdaws be kept within reasonable limits; there is plenty of room for both.—Ed.

There is no worse vermin than the common house cat when she takes to hunting, and I have known them go completely wild and breed in the woods. The custom in the farm-house and cottage is, when the hour at night for shutting up comes, to give the cat a kick, and turn her out into the barn-yard or garden to catch rats, or, in fact, to shift for herself. A cat soon finds that leverets and rabbits are not only better eating, but that they do not bite when caught, so, instead of ratting or mousing, she repairs to the preserve of game. While living at the Inn at Cranford Bridge, I knew a cat to bring into the kitchen, one by one, a whole covey of partridges. For cats, the hutch-trap is good, but a steel trap, with the paunch of a rabbit suspended about six inches from the ground against the butt of a tree, the trap set within an inch of the bait, so that if a fox came to take it, which is very unlikely, he could do so over the trap without being caught, is the best; the fence twigs on either side the bait also, though high enough to guide a cat, are so low that a fox would reach over them. To these traps I added the call-boy services of a tame raven, which was chained, as is customary with a macaw. When fastened out in a field between the woods, within shot of the gun, the raven makes a very good decoy, for kites and hawks will take a stoop or two close over his head, and crows, jays, and magpies come to mob him. I had a raven, while at Cranford, which was so tame that I could toss him up (he was pinioned) on to the nearest bough, and he would ascend to some bare branch to sun himself or plume his feathers, and croak at every large bird he saw. So used to the killing of other vermin was he, and so pleased with it, that whatever fell to the gun, he would descend the tree in the most amusing hurry to get to the ground, and with his ponderous beak hammer the head of the fallen victim. When the decoy for the place was over, a lure of meat would always bring him to hand. This puts me in mind of a story told me of a raven. The bird was tame and pinioned, and had strayed from his owner's house into the orchard of the village curate. A lot of rooks having visited the parson's cherries, the reverend gentleman kept his gun in readiness, and seeing the raven under his trees, he stalked him by the aid of a hedge. Bang went the fruit-avenging gun, and the raven, having felt a shot or two rattle on his feathers, began to hop and flap along the ground as fast as he could. Up ran the parson, thinking to secure an offender, to be impaled as a future scarecrow, when just as he was about to grasp the raven, the bird opened his mouth to bite, and cried, "D—n your blood!" So startled was the divine, that he threw down his gun, and ran away.

With traps, gun, and raven, an enormous amount of vermin soon came to hand. The largest bag in one day of old and young jays, when they had left the nest, was thirty-two, and at the end of the year my list of all sorts gave me five hundred head. When I killed a winged vermin, I brought home his head or legs to nail up, and cast the body into the woods, and in a very short time the foxes as regularly picked them up. This was proved by the bird being gone, and then by the wings I found with the cubs. There were a pair of wary old buzzards that had, I suspect, lost toes in my traps, for I could not get them to take a bait, but still hoped to effect it by leaving baits about without a trap. I had put a dead squirrel on a little hillock in a field between the Harrold woods, and when I returned to look at it the next day it was gone. "Now for a trap," I thought to myself, as I closely inspected the site where the bait had lain; but, within a foot of the spot where I had left the squirrel, there lay a young pheasant only a few days out of the shell, which, by the mark of a pad in a mole-hill, a fox had dropped when it took up the squirrel. I obtained a shot at one of these buzzards with a cartridge of No. 1 shot, at an immense distance; and as the bird sat on a bare bough with the breast to me, I thought I must have hit her. This was proved a couple of days after, by my finding the wings in the playground of some cubs.

All this time the kennel at Harrold proceeded rapidly. Mr. Berhill, with the touch of a conjurer's wand, the magic supplied by me, soon converted the barn into a feeding-house, the cow-sheds into lodging-houses, and a portion of the farm-yard into a spacious yard for hounds. In addition to this, another large shed made an over-night kennel for the hunting hounds, and a lesser one a house for the bitches. The coach-house made a capital three-stall stable, and the cart stables grew into comfortable stalls and boxes, which, in addition to the stable I found there, made the thing complete. A boiling-house, with running water at hand, built a little way off the kennel, to prevent the smuts from the chimney soiling the coats of my hounds, was also soon finished; and I wrote to my butler, who had behaved so gallantly with Smoker and the stag, to bring to Harrold my pack, assisted by their kennel-man; whippers-in were not then in my service. I shall never forget how impatient I was for their appearance on the day of their arrival. The kennel, whitewashed and dry, and the nice clean straw, which I had got put on to the bedsteads, looked so inviting, that I could have slept in it myself. Towards the afternoon I mounted Norna, and went to meet them. We had a joyous meeting, the hounds and myself, at the bridge near Oakley; and at the bridge at Harrold the people of the little town and many of the yeomen and farmers came to meet me, the bells in the steeple setting up a merry peal. What happened, was what I feared would happen; one of the horses of my friends, the rider of which had come up to bid me welcome, severely kicked a hound, though without serious injury; the yeomen and farmers then attended me to the kennel, and Harrold, for the first time in its existence, contained a pack of hounds. The first purchase I made in horse-flesh was of ponies for cub-hunting, and one or two likely young horses from farmers, out of condition. In buying these horses, and knowing the points of a clever horse, though lean, I took care that they were large enough for machiners, so that, if they did not train on to be hunters, at the out-of-condition price I gave for them, I could not lose money. Some of these horses turned out admirably; for one, for whom I gave thirty pounds, after I had ceased to keep hounds, I sold at three hundred guineas; and many more paid me, besides their work, double and treble what

I gave for them. If a master of hounds is a good judge of horse-flesh, he gets one pull in his favour by the purchase of clever young horses out of condition, in summer, for his men; it is, I think, the only pull he gets. Oatmeal I got very good from Oakley Mill, but, of course, not old. Lord Tavistock had a stock of old meal in hand; but with a view, I suppose, at that time, to keep up the price of agricultural produce, he set his face against anything like free trade with me, and demanded such a sum per ton, that it was out of any reasonable means to get it. Good meal, however, I got, coarsely ground, and well dried, and by having a lot of it, and treading it well into bins and barrels, the hounds had sound food to work on.

The first whipper-in that entered my service was Tom Skinner, from Mr. Hay—a first-rate horseman, and rider, and sportsman, and whipper-in; I never saw a better, or a better tempered man; but—oh, hang that word! it is a small one, but what a multitude of ills it sometimes holds!—"but" he had drunk hard, and ere he could ride, or, I believe, shave himself, he was obliged to swallow a dram. The dram, *at first*, made him no more than all right; but soon the quantity to make him steady for the day unsteadied him for the moment, and I detected him in his saddle, elated by his gin. As second whipper-in, I took a man from the Salisbury hounds, who they told me knew his business; but I suspect the knowledge they said he had, pertained only to riding after the late Lady Salisbury, for he knew nothing about hounds and was useless to me.

At exercise I looked well at the situation of the woods and open-country covers, and noticed by their usings where there was any amount of game, and also what quantity of partridges I had at Stevington: I mention the latter observation, as I shall have to allude to it again. Inch by inch grew the wheat, and I almost shouted when I saw the ears of corn, as it was an indication that the first of July approached, about which day the hunting, from time immemorial, in those heavy woodlands, had commenced. At last, the first day of cub-hunting was fixed; the morning came, and by half-past three, though it rained hard, I was on the best little galloway that ever was foaled, then only three years old—my chestnut mare Freyia. Longstaff, who had been gamekeeper to the grandfather of the present Lord Northampton—and a pretty good one, from the quantity of game he once had (the remnants of a good show of pheasants were still in Yardley Chase when I first came there) —assured me he had several litters of foxes; and, depending on his information, not having had time to inspect the chase myself, I drew for them. I do not think there was a cub in the chase. An old fox was kind enough to give the hounds a view at him; but from him I was subsequently obliged to refrain, as he went into the corn. Nevertheless, this old fox did me some good, by showing himself to the eyes and noses of my main dependence, the hounds that had hunted stag, and, at a cheer from me, capped as I had an opportunity of capping them to a view, they ran him right merrily. I drew again, and, discovering that at least no one belonging to the chase could show me where the cubs had used, I resolved to return to the Harrold woods, with which I was better acquainted. Large as the quarters are, and tangled with blackthorn, briar, hazel, oak, and luxuriant grass as the underwood is, though I knew there were cubs there or thereabouts—stump-bred foxes shift a long way sometimes in the course of a night—I had difficulty, from the want of a body of hounds to draw, in finding one. Having but one thing left for it, I rode into the thick of the cover myself. In this way, with not more than two or three hounds drawing wide of me, I had forced my passage into the middle of Harrold Dungey, when, within ten yards of my foot, I heard an eager whine and a dash as of a hound at something, and then such a crash—for about forty couples of hounds were round me—as made my heart almost jump out of my mouth. Full cry in a moment was the pack, for the cub was in the midst of them, and right lustily did I encourage them. The rain had ceased, it had all come down, and though the woods were wet, there was a scent. The first ride I got into, how eagerly I watched, to view the fox, ascertain if it was a cub, and see what hounds were leading. The cry came right for where I stood, but the fox had crossed before I got there. The first two bitches that came into the ride, working evidently as if they were used to it, were Buxome and Brilliant, given me by Mr. Russell of Brancepeth. Beautiful they were to look at, but because they were in their prime, this being their second season, I had set them down in my own mind as drafted for some fault. They never showed a fault with me, but two better foxhounds never entered a kennel. We worked that cub for upwards of an hour and a half as if the hounds were tied to him, and I don't think we ever had another on foot; and at last, while he was threading a hedge that ran from one cover to another, a shepherd's dog caught view of him, and coursed him certainly to a gate of a cover ride, and from that gate we could never hit him again. I drew every quarter of the woods near, but could never more touch on that cub; and, as the shepherd admitted to a man some few days afterwards, that the cub had hung in the bars of the gate till his dog got up to him, I have ever suspected that the shepherd knew more of the end of that fox than I did. Not wishing to jade my hounds, I returned home.

Soon after this, I had been running old foxes and cubs in the Odell and Harrold woods, with a very indifferent scent all the morning, not having yet had blood; and the hounds were at a check in a small cover of Mr. Orlebar's, called Little Goreong. I was sitting by the cover-side, speaking to the hounds, when I thought I saw something rise over a headland in a distant field, mobbed by the rooks. I looked steadfastly, and, going heavily across ridge and furrow, I saw a fox coming towards me over the open; and, as he came nearer, I distinguished an old fox, a good deal used up. He was evidently coming home again, from a ring he had given himself over the open, under a delusion that the hounds that had run him in the first of the morning in cover were still after him. Stock still I sat like a statue; and luckily no other person was on that side the cover, and not a hound in cover spoke. On the fox came, the rooks leaving him as they saw me, till he was well-landed in the grass-field where I stood, and within forty yards of the little cover full of hounds. As soon as he saw me he dashed for the cover, and I gave such a view holloa and touch of the horn as sent him in,—taking up all his attention, and bringing the hounds out, or gathering them near, to meet him. One hound met him on the bank, and caught at him; but he was gone in an instant, with all the hounds crashing at his brush. The cover became foiled, and, though we contrived to head him whenever he would have broken for the great woods and fresh foxes, he lived for another hour; and then! did I not rejoice, when I heard that, to a huntsman's ear, unmistakable silence, broken only by a growl, that proclaims a victory! This was my first fox. The gloves I had on when I picked him up for days were as perfume in my nostrils; but another triumph the very next day I went out, awaited me!

We drew the Melchbourne woods, and found a litter of four cubs. There was plenty of riot there, but the hares were out on the farms, and therefore not in the way; besides this, there was, though not a brilliant, a thoroughly good holding scent, enough to keep the pack well together, and to give every hound who wished to hunt plenty to do. We ran hard for more than two hours, and during that time I never saw a hound out of place; and when at last we settled to a cub, and thoroughly hunted him down, great was my joy to see old Proctor roll him over into a ditch by the side of the woods out of which the body of the pack had driven him. This was triumph number two, and I began to think it was all plain sailing; but fate had in store for me much hard and up-hill work with the hounds, for which I did not care, had fate but kept men in the Oakley Club from raising a cabal against me.

I continued to work at the great woods incessantly; for having a pack to make, as well as having heard the rumour that "if from the open, a fox got into those fastnesses it was all up with sport for the day," I determined to meet both contingencies. The first task then, that I resolved to attempt, was to make myself master of the heavy work, and if possible to teach the best foxes to fly. Let all young sportsmen lay this down as a rule, that not only the fox, who has a more than common share of reason and cunning in his head, but every animal of chase, has full sense enough to know when he is safe; and if a huntsman permits his foxes to find out that he can neither make them break, nor kill them in large covers (in the large covers during the best part of the hunting season they will be), he will find his open country deserted. No man knew a fox better than my father's huntsman, Tom Oldaker; and no man understood the fox better than Lord Fitzhardinge: than Lord Fitzhardinge's present huntsman the annals of sporting could not show a better. Harry Ayris is always with his hounds, a first-rate rider over a country, quick as lightning when he should be so, and patient and quiet when hounds ought to be let alone; and in addition to this, as fine a sportsman, and as good a servant as ever had the charge of a magnificent kennel. It was said of Tom Oldaker, that when there was little or no scent to serve him, he could "guess a fox to death." In these few words lies the greater portion of a huntsman's field duty. He should be able, when the hounds are thoroughly at a loss, to assist them; and while their noses are down in vain, his head should be up in thought as to the probable point for which the fox was making.

In summer, every day that my hounds were fit—taking care never to jade them, and after sufficient work, if possible always to leave off on the death of a fox—found me in one place or other of the great woodlands; and when I discovered that the foxes would hang in the thorny and most severe quarters of Odell great wood, and other woods like it, I took the hint from the effect it has in a gorse cover, and gave the fox to the hounds in the midst of the bushes. What effect all this had on the woodland foxes, the sequel of this true history will show.

The first of September approached; and I remember dining at Bletsoe, just before its arrival, with Mr. St. Leger. Mr. Magniac, from Colworth, dined there, whom I had known as a hard rider, with my staghounds, on a famous gray mare, and who always loved hunting, and did his best to support it on every occasion. He had covers at Colworth, which were a sure find, and the foxes beautifully preserved: a hospitable, kind-hearted gentleman, who supported me well—independently of the Oakley Club—throughout my stay in that country; and I confess that one of the regrets that attended my departure was, that I should have him no longer for a neighbour. Besides Mr. Magniac, there were several others; and as usual the conversation after dinner turned on sport. Mr. St. Leger, rather slightingly of my supposed bag on the first, asked me what I expected to get; adding I was deceived if I thought there was much there. I replied that I should do very well, and thought I should bag as much, perhaps, as he did, or anybody in the room. This was received with exclamations of derision, when, as I heard that Mr. St. Leger did little else in the sporting line but shoot, though always with a cigar in his mouth, I added to my previous rashness, by saying I was sure I should beat him. I said this because I never saw a man do much at anything who did two things at once, particularly when one of those two things consisted in a pipe; and I knew that in walking and shooting, and *a* pointer (I had but one), few men, if any, could beat me. Bets were talked of, but none made; and I thought Mr. Magniac, who knew something of my proficiencies in sport, was highly amused by the wrath my apparent presumption had occasioned in Mr. St. Leger. The day arrived; I shot at Stevington, and so home by Carlton, with my curious old pointer Don, who certainly was the ugliest and oddest animal that man ever had, and who always sulked in the far end of a tub from the first of February till the first of September. The coming off of the hammer of one barrel of my gun saved a good many birds, as it was some time before a second gun could reach me; however, before four o'clock, and with lots of scattered birds around me, to kill if I pleased, I left off to go to my kennel, with thirty-one brace of birds, and a hare or two. I believe Mr. St. Leger bagged somewhere about ten brace; in short, no one who was at that dinner party made anything like the bag I did. To show what preservation will do, and the breeding up partridges by hand, I do not think that on the farms round the great woods at Harrold, when I first came, I could have killed two brace of birds. Having bred by hand there, at a tent which I pitched for an under-keeper, where I had previously found no partridges, during the few last years of my stay I could always, in the earlier part of September, average twenty brace.

When the harvest was gathered, and riot come home to the covers, the nutting season, and the shooting season, and the fall of the leaf conjoined, these united difficulties in so wide an extent of woodland entailed at times a lengthened draw before I could find a fox, and occasioned me much trouble. The immense body or over-cry of young hounds in high condition, and, as the saying is, "full of devil," as young hounds should be, who had been taught what hunting was, and who were impatient for a scent, no matter what it was—most of them those from Berkeley Castle, reared on farms full of hares, where they commenced hunting as soon as they could run,—I say this over-cry of puppies, in a long draw for a fox, or in a bad scent among hares, was a very difficult thing to manage, and required the utmost patience and perseverance, and a quick whipper-in, —and that I had in Tom Skinner. When things went wild, it was difficult under these circumstances to show sport; but every now and then, with a quick find and a holding scent, the cry would bring down the very leaves, and make the bushes crack again, as the eager devilry rushed through the woods.

The first regular season commenced; I advertised the four days a week, and was soon given to see that the chief and most disagreeable difficulty I had to contend with was a certain malevolence within, what was called, the Oakley Club; the secretary of which did not hunt, and therefore could not have been personally interested, or much of a judge in the sport and method of the master of hounds. Towards the close of the first season, the Oakley Club, continuing in the same course which they had latterly observed towards the former master of hounds, Lord Tavistock, held a solemn meeting; I do not think there were more than a proprietor or two among them, and at this meeting they attempted to dictate to me. The step they took was to inform me "that they were dissatisfied with the sport I had shown, and that therefore I *must* keep a huntsman, or they should cease in their subscriptions." This pompous order I as flatly refused to listen to; at the same time informing the Club, that if any gentleman would tell me to my face that he individually regretted having subscribed, I would write him a cheque for what he had given, and cancel his liability for the future; but if their secretary, acting for them as a body, attempted to shirk the responsibility of the thousand pounds per annum for two years, which he had pledged himself on the part of the Club to find, I would try if the law would not force the payment. Here ended the matter for the time; I went on as usual, the hounds becoming every hour more efficient, and the sport increasing.

The first season being over, my next object was to breed as many puppies as I could obtain walks for; which, with my second choice of those bred at Berkeley Castle, would be sufficient for my entry. To induce the farmers to undertake the trouble of a puppy, and as some little acknowledgment to those who had kindly and gratuitously offered to do so, I resolved to give a silver cup to him who delivered to the kennel the best-conditioned and finest-grown puppy; my decision to be made known at a dinner which I gave to all those who reared and brought home young hounds. This took amazingly; it was a thing to look forward to—a merry meeting, considerably promoting good fellowship and the preservation of foxes. I was short of brood bitches the first season, and I bred from a bitch I had from Sir John Cope, called Jeopardy; the father of her puppies was a compact and powerful hound, called Blazer, whom I had from Colonel Wyndham. Blazer was entered when he came to me, but I soon discovered his fault; he was a confirmed skirter. Otherwise he was a most industrious and stout dog, very steady, and a very good hound to draw. He was nothing near so bad a skirter as his brother, who the first day that I had him in the open, behaved so ill on a cold scent, that I ordered the man from the Salisbury kennel—I forget his name at this moment—to catch him and couple him up, or leave him at a farm-house, anywhere so that he was not with me. The man caught him and destroyed him on the spot; and for this act, unauthorised by me, he the same night received warning to quit my service; he remained only till I could get another whipper-in. I bred from Blazer and Jeopardy, being short of brood-bitches, because the blood of each was good; Jeopardy being somewhat slack and slow upon the line, and Blazer as much too free. Between two faults you occasionally meet perfection; in this instance numerical perfection was arrived at, in the shape of the strength of the litter; she had eighteen puppies, which was the most I ever knew at one birth. By the aid of wet nurses all these puppies were reared, but not one of them came into use, either through distemper or want of figure; and as this often happens in litters of foxhounds, men may judge of the value of a full-sized puppy over the distemper and passed for the entry of the season. This reminds me of the trial at Gloucester, where a farmer was sued by Mr. Horlock, I think, for having destroyed a fine foxhound puppy and buried it in his mixen. The body of the puppy was afterwards exhumed by the whipper-in; and sworn to by the litter-mark on the ear. The puppy was bred from a hound of the Duke of Beaufort's; and Bill Long and myself were called on to speak to the value of a full-sized puppy so bred. When Long was asked what he considered such a puppy to be worth, he said to the jury, "I'll tell you, gentlemen: Sir William Codrington, he says to me, says he, Bill, says he, old (I forget the name of the sire) is worth a thousand pounds."

"Stop," said the counsel; "Mr. Long, we don't want to hear what anybody else has said; we want you to tell us of your own knowledge, on your oath, what you think the puppy was worth."

"Just so," said Bill Long; "I was going to tell ye. We were out one day, when Sir William Codrington, he say, says he to me, says he, Bill—" "Stop!" again roared the Court, "we have nothing to do with Sir William Codrington." It was useless though; Long would tell them the tale in his own way, or not at all; so I was then called to give evidence on the hound's value.

I said that if the young hound was such as was described to me, full-grown and handsome, and over the distemper, and fit to join the pack for entry, he must be worth, to his master, not less than twenty pounds, or more. On this Serjeant Talfourd, who was for the defence, stared, and, in cross-examination, asked me "how I arrived at the value of the animal?" My reply was, "through what I knew it to cost a master of hounds to breed it; the numbers that die; and the numbers that fall short in figure, and the few that are fit to 'enter.'" Talfourd appeared satisfied, and no other question was asked me, when the jury found for the plantiff. The amount of damage I do not remember.

I also sent a quiet, line-hunting, inoffensive bitch, called Hannah, who came to me astray, to Mr. Osbaldeston's kennel, under Jack Stephens, to a hound called Furrier, or to any he recommended, if Furrier was too much engaged. She bred me three puppies, who turned out very well; they were by Chorister, and, as I expected from what I had heard, with plenty of flying straightneckedness, to make her progeny lift their heads when the scent served.

I think my kennel doors showed the scalps of fourteen brace of foxes at the close of the first season; and the season over, I amused myself with fishing, haymaking, preserving game, rounding the puppies, and exercising my hounds. I remember, one beautiful summer's night, being awakened by the challenge, the hunting challenge of hounds, not the bay of the bitches that were in hutches with their whelps, but the tongue of a hound on scent. At first, I thought I must have dreamed it; but on listening, I heard a hound distinctly speak to a scent; he was then joined by the tongues of several others, the cry at the same time moving from place to place. I got up directly, as none of my men lived near, and went forth; the fun was all over when I got out, and one or two of the bitches bayed me till they found out their friend, and then the first who jumped upon me saturated my dressing-gown with water. The next and the next who came up were similarly wet, and one or two were panting; I therefore saw and felt that their chase had taken them through the river. I could not comprehend it; but having quieted them, and seen them to their hutches with their whelps, I went to bed again. For some little time I did not hear any more of this night-work; but still in the morning I found the bitches sleepy, and as if tired, and also that they were going back in their milk; I saw that, though I had not heard them, they had been at work; so the next thing I did, having found them in the previous instance wet, was to examine the banks of the river. Sure enough there were the places where they had been scrambling in and out; and at last I discovered that they had been hunting an otter, who, from the mill above my house to the deep water below the bridge, on account of the shallows, usually ran the meadows. Thence I adopted the plan of chaining the bitches to their hutches at night. Over my chimney-piece in the dining-room, at this moment, is a fine dog otter, which Mr. Drake killed, while I was present, in the Ouse, at Bromham, in Bedfordshire, a very nice seat belonging to Lord Dynevor.

A good many of my puppies were walked by Mr. Polhill's tenants at Howbury Hall; but in 1830, upon the demise of the Crown, I lost all these walks. My readers will think it odd what that had to do with it; but it had, nevertheless, from the general election which followed. At that election, Mr. Polhill made his first appearance in the political world, for which I had long observed him paying or paving the way. He bought horses of one man; set up a four-in-hand, sixteen legs to the team, of course, but not more than five eyes; and gave a wooden leg to a poor girl, and did everything that was popular among those who were to exercise the elective franchise in the borough of Bedford. I thought him rash; for considering the

Duke of Bedford's property and interest in and around that borough, the present Mr. Whitbread's, too, and the magnificent public establishments and charities endowed by Mr. Whitbread's father, I thought that the Bedford and Whitbread interest combined, in favour of a man with any talent, could have ensured the election of any person they pleased. When it was declared that *the* statesman of the house of Bedford, Lord John Russell, was to be a candidate, in conjunction with Mr. W. H. Whitbread, I made sure that a gentleman without any pretensions at all for public life, like Mr. Polhill, would most assuredly be beaten. In those days my political principles were really much what they are now: I was of the school of the old Whig, which is now the school of many of Lord Derby's followers, and professed much the same policy that Lord John Russell then entertained. Since then parties have changed, and many of those with whom I used to think have left me, and, in my opinion, have played a game of sheer expediency, which permits the players to be pushed on, for the sake of power or rather of office, farther and faster than it is right or wise to go. Castles, bishops, and knights, in this political game of chess, to the endangerment of king and queen in the long run, all must go down before the pawns; and I only wonder that the old board for the game is not by some aspiring tradesman reversed, with miniature Manchesters representing castles, Socialists for bishops, cotton-spinners for knights, and for pawns, the Lord help us! sweeps on a May-day, or semblances of that well-known king of a part of the African free coast, Jack Robinson, who, when he receives in state the captains of Her Majesty's cruisers in suppression of the slave trade, rigs himself out in a cocked hat, feather, and broadsword, without a rag to cover him. As I was only a master of hounds in Bedfordshire, and not indigenous to the county, I resolved not to interfere in the election in any way, not to canvass my tradesmen, nor to permit my name to be mixed up in the approaching struggle. At the eleventh hour, and just before the close of the poll, word was brought me that the canvassers of Mr. Polhill had made free use of my name to my tradesmen, and so obtained or neutralised several votes. On this I at once repaired to the scene of action, and, in company with Lord John Russell, canvassed several votes which were neutralised, among them the veterinary surgeon who attended my stables, and he consented to vote for Lord John Russell, but was afraid to go to the poll on account of Mr. Polhill's people, that which is usually called the mob being on Mr. Polhill's side. Upon this, I assured him I would answer for his safety, took him by the arm, and saw him register his vote. The election concluded by the return of Mr. W. H. Whitbread and Mr. Polhill, the latter beating Lord John Russell by five votes. Mr. Polhill then took umbrage at what I had done, although the actions of his own canvassers called for it, and his tenants sent home every puppy from their walks; on my reporting this at Woburn, those puppies were received by his Grace's tenants.

The summer passed pleasantly enough, and, on commencing cub-hunting, foxes came infinitely quicker to hand than they did the first season; and we occasionally killed two or three of a morning, which I could well afford to do in the woodlands, the cubs having been better preserved. A very near neighbour of mine, Mr. Higgins, of a place called Turvey Abbey, I found to be rabid against hounds and foxes; indeed, I had been warned to avoid his land as much as possible. For a wonder, as they told me, he tolerated my crossing his estate more quietly than usual; but he destroyed every fox he could get near. I once ran a cub into his grounds and killed him, and in the ditch of the little plantation by which the hounds broke him up there lay two of the same litter, shot, and their brushes cut off. Now I know very well that there are few men who will favour a sport, how much good soever it may do to the country, if they enjoy it not themselves, or who like to have their hen-roosts assailed and their game taken by an animal that makes them individually no return. When I say "few" perhaps I am wrong; "some men" would be nearer the mark, for there are a great many, and ladies among them, who, though they do not hunt, preserve foxes. Still, when a man is not very fond of his game, and has a hen-roost that foxes cannot reach, I think his practice sharp when he murders cubs with a gun, the master of hounds being able and willing to kill them, even in July, if sent for. Mr. Higgins had an old fat keeper who, among the farmers and labouring people, went by rather an indifferent nickname, who never went out after dark, and feared his own shadow by moonlight, portly and unghostlike as it was. This man, and there are hundreds of men called gamekeepers that resemble him, lost all his master's game by poachers and the smaller vermin, and then laid their depredations on the fox. There was no danger in attacking, taking, or killing a fox, so this fellow concentrated all his hatred on that animal, and cruelly punished it, as he would have done by the poachers—*if he dared.* I have frequently run foxes, from Yardley Chase once, and from other places often, up to the premises of Turvey Abbey, and checked, the hounds trying its very doors. Of course, knowing his mood, and not wishing to find Mr. Higgins instead of the fox, the moment they checked I lifted them round the house in vain! Up to the doors they would go, and no farther; and I almost thought that the fox was a witch, or that Mr. Higgins was a magician who took the shape of a fox on purpose to be hunted and to draw me into mischief. On one of these occasions, when, as usual, the hounds were knocking at the door, some one told me that Mr. Higgins was out; so I sent in my compliments to ask Mrs. Higgins if I might look into the yard, as I thought the fox was in a drain. While the message was gone in I climbed on a sort of garden wall, and was trying to see as much as I could, when the lady herself appeared and civilly regretted she could not give me leave to search the premises, as Mr. Higgins was so much against hounds, but I might look into any of the drains *outside.* I had already drawn the hounds over them; my wish was for the inside of the premises, as I was sure, as on similar occasions I always had been sure, that my hunted fox was left in Turvey Abbey. I sat on the wall and exhausted every topic of conversation, in order to create delay and give others time to peep into all the places they could; however, as there must be an end to everything, I was obliged to bid the lady adieu, dismount the wall, and mount my horse. Harry Boulton was with me, as good a sportsman and good a fellow as need be; so, as we left the place, it being towards the expiration of the time I hunted the country, I told him to recollect my words, and, if my successor ever ran a fox and lost him at Turvey Abbey, if Mr. Higgins, or whoever might succeed Mr. Higgins, would permit it, by all means to search the outhouses, and particularly the ivy on the top of Mr. Higgins's bedroom, for I was certain that the foxes, in contempt for the hostility of master and man, absolutely slept over the heads of both, and almost tickled their noses with their brushes. People laughed at this idea, and talked of hidden drains, or the fox's having gone on; but I had hounds on whom I could depend, and I knew better.

Mr. Dansey succeeded me in hunting the country, and one day he ran a fox and lost him as I had done. Boulton remembered what I had told him, and had, by some dealings with him, I think for hay, got into Mr. Higgins's good graces. He therefore told Mr. Dansey to appear to go away with the hounds, and then he would ask Mr. Higgins to let him, out of mere curiosity, look over the premises. Harry Boulton had an eye for the ivy, but, as soon as he had got into the backyard, he saw the mark of nails where animals had scrambled on to outhouses that, in the end, enabled them to get on to the house. Delighted, he asked for a ladder, and, when he came to where the animals ascended to the roof of the mansion, he said the path was as evident as a hare's run in a preserve. Up he got, crept along a well-used gutter, and peeped quietly over a raised roof into the next gutter. As soon as he raised himself sufficiently, close to his nose, and curled up in a well-used kennel in the ivy and fast asleep, lay a fox, while another fox, the one that had led the hounds there, stretched himself at his ease, slightly panting, in a gutter below, several other kennels in the ivy also appearing. Boulton was so delighted that, with a flick of his whip and a holloa, he sent the foxes from their triumphant retreat over Mr. Higgins's nightcap unceremoniously to the ground. Mr. Dansey and the hounds heard the holloa, and, one of the foxes hanging by the quarters in some palings, on the pack coming up, he was killed. After this a very funny caricature was published by M'Lean in the Haymarket, which, for all I know, is extant still, of an old gentleman looking out of a window in his night-dress, with a vixen fox of quaint deportment immediately over his head almost touching the tassel of his nightcap with her brush, while the fat keeper underneath the window is told "that his master is sure that he smells a fox." These foxes for years had been in the habit of sleeping on the roof of the very man who searched his fields and plantations for them all day.

Throughout my second season in Bedfordshire foxes came, as I said before, much oftener to hand, and I had a very good season for sport. Still the Oakley Club would not allow that I did anything well, and for ever some or other of its members, *not all of them*, were making light of the runs. One day, when the country was very heavy, we fell in with one of the severest runs in pace, continuance, and distance I ever saw in my life; changing foxes, running all over the Crossalbans country, and leaving off near Chellington, in the direction of Bletsoe. The effect of this run was that one of the gentlemen, who denied me any sport or merit as a huntsman, though he was neither a good nor a hard rider, killed his horse; and, I am sorry to say, one of my whippers-in killed his also. This was a stopper to one detracting mouth at least, but it also put into my stables a horse belonging to a bootmaker and small farmer at Harrold, named Allen, who eventually paid me well for the loss I had sustained. This horse was poor and out of condition, and, my stable being full, I had strongly recommended Mr. Magniac and other gentlemen to buy him; they, however, on one plea or other—either that he was not handsome enough or had not action enough—neglected to do so; and the instant that the run was over and my man's horse reported dead, I ordered old Pack, who had ridden second horse for Mr. Lea Anthony, to jog on gently to Harrold and put the bootmaker's horse in my stable at the price his master had set on him, thirty guineas or pounds, I forget which. The fact was, as there were a vast number of horses stopped that day, I feared other people might be in want of a horse and, aware of my recommendation, buy him. This horse was afterwards ridden by Tom Skinner, and then by George Carter, and his condition improved and his fencing perfected, though the latter was perfect indeed when I bought him, and Ready then came into my stable as handsome and as good a horse as ever huntsman rode. When the sorrowful day had arrived and passed, the parting between me and my hounds, I sold Ready to Lord Fitzhardinge for three hundred guineas.

# CHAPTER VI

"Perplex thy soul no more with cares below,
For what will pelf avail!
Thy courser paws the ground,
Each beagle cocks his tail,
They spend their mouths around."

*Oh Somerville, good God! why sing you so—*
*Each sportsman's ear to wound?*

The time for which I had agreed to hunt the country for a thousand a year with the Oakley Club was now concluded, and the Club intimated to me that they should look out for another master of hounds. I cut that very short at once by telling them that the country did not belong to the Club; it belonged to the proprietors of covers and to me so long as I had their permission; and if I found any other master of hounds endeavouring to undermine me and in negotiation with them, the matter would be personal between him and me. The tenant-farmers, too, took my part strongly; and they addressed a memorial, numerously signed by tenants cultivating many thousand acres, to his Grace of Bedford, as the leading proprietor, expressing their wishes that the proprietors would continue to support me, and saying, much interested as they were in it, "I had their best wishes to a man." The document was very complimentary to me; and considering the acreage farmed by my yeomen friends, and the good-will now kindly exhibited towards me by a number of gentlemen owning covers, the Oakley Club were nonsuited; they could neither get a master of hounds to negotiate with them, nor could they take the country from me. This attempt to domineer over me was of a piece, in short, with former conduct to Lord Tavistock, when they claimed his hounds. In addition to the support of the landed interest, instead of the subscriptions falling short, my subscription that year increased; and as I had hunted the country in scarlet coats the first two years, giving in to a request from the Oakley Club that I would do so, I now donned the old family colour and appeared in the tawny garb.

On the third season, the very fact of my pack having too much youth among them at the first, now gave me a body of hounds of two years' experience, so that mine then began to be a most powerful kennel. I think it was either at the close of the second year, or before the commencement of the third, that my friend Loraine Smith, hearing that I wanted a first whipper-in, told me "that the Duke of Grafton in his opinion was about to discharge his best man." His account of him was, a "first-rate sportsman, and as hard as nails." He informed me "that the duke had decided on lessening his establishment, and parted with Carter as being the least in favour." On the 10th of May, I think in 1833, George Carter, Mr. Ashheton Smith's present huntsman, came to me from the Duke of Grafton, after having whipped-in to his Grace's hounds for three seasons. The man from the Salisbury kennel having been discharged, I punished Tom Skinner for his only fault, drinking, by making him second whipper-in, and taking George Carter as my head man. I remember the remark of some hunting farmers at the commencement of my third season, when early in the year we had had some brilliant sport, "that they believed the Oakley foxes did not know what the devil to make of the tawny coats, and that they would fly the country when they were after them, as already we had run into Lord Fitzwilliam's country, ere the regular fixtures had begun." With a scent the foxes were obliged to go somewhere, or be killed, for a strong body of hounds, then in the third year of their experience, showed them no mercy, and made the welkin ring again. I soon found reason to be much pleased with George Carter; not only was he quick to hounds, but he had a head on his shoulders, was most observant, and an exceedingly good-mannered man. No huntsman was better seconded than I was with him; he was a better first whipper-in than Tom Skinner, while the latter was the best second whipper-in I ever saw. As a huntsman I felt myself in clover, for my men knew my habits, each understood his duty, and when running a fox in Yardley Chase, where the quarters were very large, and the rides wide apart (there is a circular drive through the continuous woods not far short of seventeen miles long), each understood the other by a touch of the horn. And now as to the horn. A vast number of gentlemen and professional huntsmen imagine that it is a sort of trumpet to assist only in making a noise; in fact, I have with packs of hounds heard two horns going at once. I have seen, not far from Northampton, master and man blowing each other black in the face; and, not far from Gloucester, the huntsman, very properly, with the leading hounds blowing his horn "to get 'em to gather:" and the master of the hounds, a mile behind, blowing his trumpet to the tail hounds: the effect of this was to stop all intermediate hounds, and make them pause as to which way the head lay. There should be but one horn heard at the same time, and master and man should have particular notes understood by each other when the voice was beyond hearing. For instance, in Yardley Chase a single note on the horn from George Carter or Tom Skinner, told me the hounds were over a ride and into a fresh quarter, and the same from me to them. If either of us doubled the notes it conveyed to the others that the hounds were away from one particular wood into another, and if continuously doubled then gone away over the open. By a huntsman the horn should never be used unless imperatively necessary; if used too much the hounds will become careless of the call. I know a country in which the master of the hounds uses his horn for ever in drawing, and this horn draws every cover in the vale within hearing. The foxes there know the trumpet as well as a cock pheasant knows the whistle of a shooter to his dog in the last month of the season, and there is not a gamekeeper there who does not know that when this horn is heard in his covers, however far off, away go the foxes he has the care of. A fox has, as I have said before, a large amount of reasoning faculty in his beautiful head, the very expression of his eye tells it, and it is further proved by the impossibility of the stuffer or preserver of beasts and birds to give the specimen its crafty and observant expression; it is also beyond the art of the painter.

While hunting Bedfordshire a curious circumstance happened to me in regard to a little boy, the son of a labourer, who used to attend the cub-hunting on foot; his name was Darlowe. This boy would neither work nor be kept at home if my fixture was within reach, but there he was in the rides of the woods, attending to the hounds, and watching for a view if needed. In only seeing the hounds out, so quick was he, and fond of the sport, that he learned every name in the pack and knew each hound individually in a remarkably short space of time, and could speak to them like a sportsman. He pleased me very much, and I thought of taking him into my service when old enough; but his appearance one morning in his pursuit of learning under difficulties accelerated his rise in the world, and made me employ him at once. I expected him out, as Odell Wood was near his cottage, but he was not there at meeting, which did not much surprise me, as he had once or twice been late, his appearance at cover delayed from the fact of his having been locked up by his mother, to prevent his going, and his being obliged to break out or descend from the window of the cottage. The hounds had found and were running, when all at once came a figure capering all alive over the nettles, with such elastic hops to escape stings, and flying garments, that my startlish mare Freyia very nearly bolted with me. This was the boy in nothing but his shirt, the rest of his wardrobe having been taken and locked up over night, by way of hostages to ensure his retention. In this undress, a prey to flies, gnats, and harvest bugs, and tortured by nettles, the boy continued the chase, and, to save him a thrashing and to reward him, I bade him tell his mother to send him to the kennel that afternoon, and I would take him into service as an aid to the hounds in kennel and field. He came, and was clothed in our tawny coat, and put upon a steady mare; but, as I have seen on other occasions, he was twice the boy when out for his own pleasure that he was when out for mine; in short, the moment his whim became a duty he was worthless, and after being with me some time, having caught the lash of my whip for being slack, he said nothing, but coolly returned home, put his horse in my stable, and retired once more to the more idle and less lucrative occupation of bird-minding.

In the previous pages I have said that, in the sequel, I would show the effect of my work in the woodlands, and the giving the fox to the hounds in the heart of the covers. In the third, fourth, and fifth years of my keeping hounds in Bedfordshire, the foxes would fly the woods for the open, or throughout the woods by the rides from cover to cover, as if they knew no safety-place. I will give several instances of it. In drawing the famed Odell Great Wood, where it was said, before I came, that all sport ended; if I did not send a whipper-in, or some farmer whom I could trust to do as I told him, a long way down-wind, the instant my voice was heard speaking to the hounds, the wild woodland fox would be off like a shot. Harry Boulton, poor Jem Whitworth, poor Brown the lawyer (the latter are both dead), and one or two more, and old Dick Perkins, the horse-dealer, used to be thus commissioned; and many a quick and fortunate holloa they gave me; orders being not to holloa from where they stood and saw the fox (a fault often committed), but to gallop down to *where they saw him*, and then to holloa. To enumerate a few of the runs thus had:—I found a fox in Odell Wood, which he left by the rides; went through the Harrold Woods, the Lavendon and Bozeat Woods by the rides; down by Brayfield and over the open to Snelson, to the river; along the river back to the town of Harrold, where the fox threw himself down in a garden; after a long check, a man put him out of the garden, he then ran down a narrow footpath between two walls, and bolted under the petticoats and through the legs of a girl whom he met, and away again by

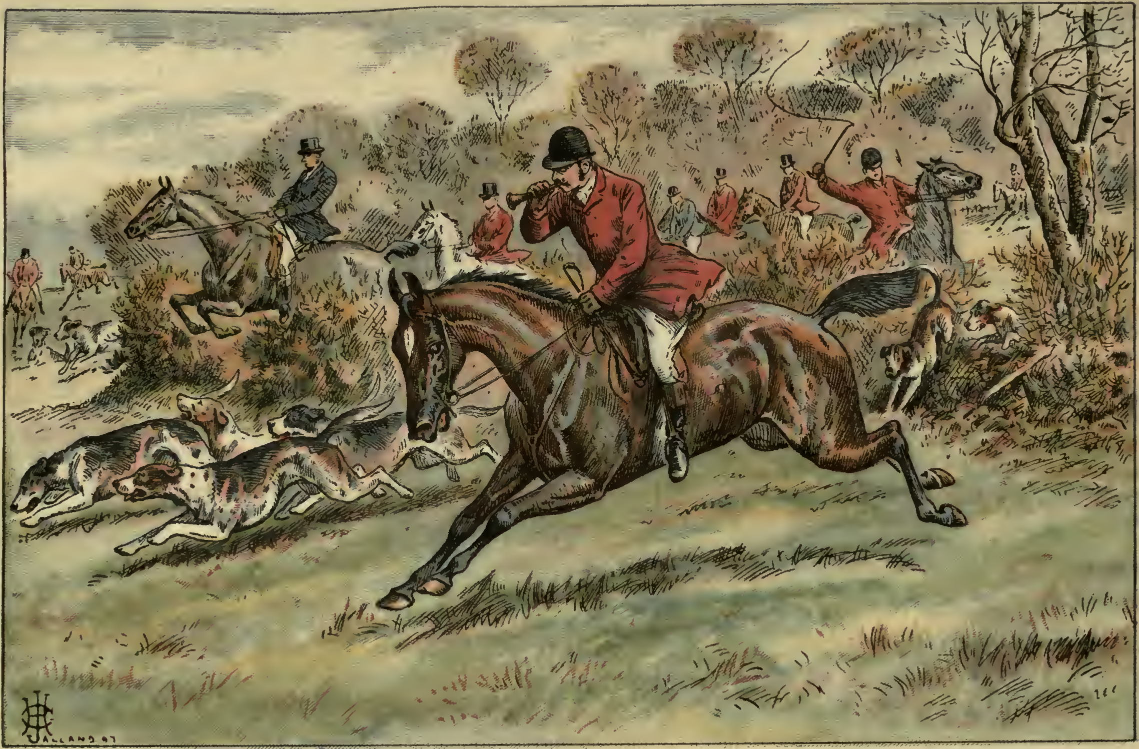
Harrold turnpike for Odell; but a few fields before he could reach the woods the hounds killed him. I have also run foxes from the Harrold Woods, and from Nottingfox Wood, and killed them in Lord Fitzwilliam's open country, and in the vicinity of Shelton Gorse. My brother Moreton did a very quick thing one day, when sent on down-wind by me, in a wood called Puddington Great Hayes. I should state, that when in my power, I always drew covers up-wind, but in heavy woodlands it is not in a huntsman's province to draw all up-wind. My brother was posted where he could command the greatest extent of rides, and I had not spoken to the hounds ten minutes, and had but just come within his hearing, when there came cautiously into the ride a brace of foxes, their heads towards me, and intently listening. They were no great distance apart, and not wishing to start them sooner than he could help, my brother watched them. He had not observed them a minute or more when circumstances enabled him to distinguish the vixen from the dog fox ; and cracking his whip the foxes disappeared on separate sides of the ride. He then galloped to the spot, and his horn and holloa bringing the hounds, he turned them on the dog fox, when we had a very fine run and killed him.

Towards the end of a season in Yardley Chase, which was a neutral woodland between the Duke of Grafton and myself, and chiefly filled at the close of the season with foxes driven there from the countries of either pack, it was quite necessary to have as many eyes that could be trusted for a fox as possible. Boulton, Ready, Whitworth, Brown, and Dick Perkins and others, were always put on this duty ; and Longland, the farmer who lived at Cowper's Oak, always had his eyes open in that likely vicinity. Yardley Chase was the best scenting-ground of all, and the most beautiful woodland in which to see hounds work, that could be. The close of the season was the period when this chase came into the greatest requisition, and it never failed me in sport. At a meet near Cowper's Oak, a curious circumstance happened. The wind suiting, instead of going to the Oak as I had fixed, I stopped under the hedge of the first wood near it; I could do so without my hounds breaking away; and as Mr. Magniac and one or two more had not arrived, I waited their appearance. While so waiting, a black-pied hound, called Sweeper, whom I had entered a puppy from the first year of my taking the Oakley country, winded high in the air, and after a little hesitation stood up on his hinder-legs, and flung his tongue. I watched him; he doubled his tongue and looked wistfully at me, and seeing Mr. Magniac arriving, I said to those standing by me, "Sweeper winds a fox." A turn of my horse's head, and the words "Over, good lads," sent every hound into the cover, and within twenty yards of where I had been standing, off they went in full cry, for a fox it was to Sweeper. Now this is a curious anecdote, and it shows to what handiness a pack of hounds may soon attain by judicious management and very little flogging. Many of my fixtures, or rather the shortest way to them, led through the rides of covers I did not intend to draw; and had I not induced my pack to great steadiness, they would have bolted away to the first wood with a riotous whimper, as I have seen other packs do. Steadiness does not mean slackness; on the contrary, it is a concentration of energy; and when the eager spirit of a foxhound is restrained till the right moment, his resolution to do his utmost only bursts forth with renovated vigour. Sweeper looked at me, after he had told me there was a fox, and waited for the sign to begin.

The first year of my hunting this country I had been running a fox in the chase, but had lost him in or about the deer park. Among the staghounds I had brought with me were Duncan and Dinah, bred by Lord Fitzhardinge; and better foxhounds never ran. In crossing the deer park, foiled as it was by fallow deer, I heard the man from the Salisbury hounds rating a hound and cracking his whip; some trees for a moment concealed what he was about, but when a view opened I saw him in the act of riding at Duncan, to cut him with his whip. Duncan was not speaking, but, his nose to the ground, he was feathering on a line of scent; and when the whipper-in rode at him, rather than quit the line, he risked being trod on by the horse and struck by the whip, and merely crouched down on the spot without yielding an inch. Though Duncan did not speak, I did, and at once stopped this error; I then rode up and softly encouraged the hound, who joyously held on, and in a hundred yards farther he was joined in his work by others, when holding the line to the park pales, Duncan flung his tongue, and sprang over them, backed by the rest; and they were at their fox again. How beautiful it is to the observant mind of a sportsman to see sagacious hounds that had gone with the eager pack some distance over the line of scent, when they checked, canter back to the very spot where they themselves *of their own knowledge knew* that the scent served, and bring their brethren back and set them right! How often have I seen old Harrogate do this, who was, I think, the most graceful hound, in his lashing style of hunting, I ever saw; but of that hound more anon. In the spring, when we were drawing Yardley Chase, and often dependent on a holloa for a good start with a fox, the bird-keeping boys on the edge of the woods—it being on one side chiefly arable land—used to annoy us much. Their cry very often, in the wind, resembled a view at a fox: and when a noise of this description was heard by the hounds, I have seen those "dear companions of my leisure hours" start from the thick cover into the ride, and stand stock-still to listen, the head inclining first to this side, then to that, as the noise was repeated. On some occasions I could not decide whether the holloa proceeded from a bird-minder or a fox-hunter, and I left it all to the hounds, and if they set zealously off to the extent of a couple or so, I could safely cheer them all to the holloa. Again, it was such a cheering sight to have a distant and decisive view from one of those I had sent on; and then to see the hounds appear in different spots along the far vista of ride which they got into, the better to race to the scene of their exertions, and bundle along—there is no better word for it; every one of them mute and racing, till they came to the expected incident of a friend with his hat off, waving which way they were to take up the scent. How they would sometimes fly that beautiful chase by the rides, either back into my country, or into the Duke of Grafton's country; and oh what pardonable mirth it was to pick up a fox there! When George Carter left me, the cause of which will be hereafter explained, and was re-engaged for the Duke of Grafton's establishment as huntsman, whenever I knew that he had a fixture in Yardley Chase, a look at the weathercock would enable me to decide where he would draw, and the same judgment could be formed by him, when the paper told him I was to be there. If ever trees knew the voices of two huntsmen, those about Cowper's Oak must have learned mine; and those at Collier's Urn become acquainted with the voice of George Carter, for they were favourite vicinities for a fox. To show that myself and my hounds were pretty well masters of our work, the last year I hunted that country, after Carter had left me, I found seventeen foxes in Yardley Chase; and with a run to each, taking them all more or less away, I missed but three, having killed fourteen.

A curious incident happened to me in this chase, which, as a reminiscence, is worth relating. There was a fine stout yeomanly-looking farmer occupying adjacent land, who always met me there, and was remarkably attentive and civil. Very often when we were drawing for a fox, we had been deceived by as loud and clear a view-holloa as man could hear. It rang in the air, was acknowledged by the hounds and owned by me, but we never by any chance could find the fox, or the man who gave the signal. Several times men and hounds rushed to the supposed site of the holloa, the hounds cast round in vain, vain too the question called by me, as to "who had holloaed." This ghostly holloa began to assume an unearthly character, but as I am not much given to superstition, I charged all whom I could trust to watch and discover whence this intangible summons proceeded. It never happened twice the same day, or on succeeding days; it was only an occasional event, about once in three fixtures. Nevertheless, it caused me much uneasiness, and deceived my hounds. Still the ghostly cry was persisted in undetected, as to the perpetrator of it, by us all. At about the time of its usual occurrence, I was in a quarter of low cover in the chase before the leaf was off, and some hounds, of whom I was not quite sure, were feathering as if on a fox close around my horse's legs. For a moment or two I had been silent, and during that silence the loud shrill view-holloa startled the air around me; and looking to the side whence it seemed to proceed, and not more than thirty yards from me, there sat the stout yeomanly farmer before alluded to, on his face a most excited expression. It seemed that the first holloa had not met with its usual success of a "hark holloa" from me; for while I looked at him he stood in his stirrups and gave a second, tickling his sides and rubbing his nose in delight at the confusion he now heard among the galloping feet of horses. My spurs were soon felt by my horse, and charging up to him with the thong doubled, I cried, "You rascal, I have got you." I confess that my whip was raised, when, instead of the resistance I expected from so young, so stout, and able a man, I beheld the most child-like look in acknowledgment of a fault; instead of a blow, therefore, I told him I would break every bone in his skin if he did not quit my hounds and go home, or if he ever appeared in my company again. A simple touch of the hat, and a turn of his horse, accompanied by the words, "Very well, sir," was all the answer he made, and then he rode away. For that season I never saw him more. It chanced in the succeeding summer I accompanied my friends Mr. and Mrs. Sharpe to see the lunatic asylum at Bedford, and among the melancholy occupants I beheld around me, straight up to me came with the greatest joy the stout yeomanly-looking farmer. He was delighted to see me, and talked of hunting, but always as if he had kept hounds and hunted the country himself; of course I humoured him and left him, he being very anxious that I should prolong my stay. The surgeon of the asylum told me that, when they let him have a newspaper during the hunting season, he used to get the fixtures of my hounds by heart, and, when the morning arrived, the old view-holloa startled his fellow prisoners at daylight, the stout yeoman damning every sane and insane soul he saw around him, for being late in not putting on their boots and breeches. The hunting day over, he would assume his usual quietude till the next appointment. There, in the asylum I left the poor fellow for months. They let him out into the garden during this time, finding him better, when he broke away over the country, chased by all the attendants, who had some difficulty in a recapture. Time sped on, and the next year, while drawing the chase, up trotted to my side the late inmate of the asylum, rather thinner but as yeomanly as ever. His greeting to me was peculiar from a singular expression of delight in seeing me, coupled with some sense of great obligation which he seemed to think himself under. I talked to him kindly, and continued to draw for a fox, my ears laid back in expectation of the old holloa. No false holloa from him was ever again heard, and during that day, in approaching a gate, the yeoman was ever at hand to open it, dismounting sometimes when his horse was fidgety, to stand with it in his hand. Once or twice I had begged him not thus to trouble himself; but on hearing him say, as if to himself, "It would indeed be odd if I did not watch every opportunity to serve you," I asked him "Why?" He replied, with tears in his eyes, "Can I ever thank you sufficiently for the kind visit you paid me when they shut me up? I never should have got out again but for you, but should have been there now." I said, "Oh no, you would have recovered without me;" he shook his head, and from that day to this I have never seen him. It seemed that in the state of his mind, when we met at the asylum, he had imbibed an impression that my visit was exclusively to him, and as from that moment he gradually recovered his reason, that impression became confirmed.

There was a very nice gorse cover at Wollaston, which was supposed to be under the care of Mr. Dickens, then the reverend pastor of that Ilk, though but once did I ever find a fox in it. Whenever I saw Mr. Dickens, I used to say, "Well, what have you got in your gorse?" and the reply invariably was, "There may be *a* rabbit; but the only thing certain in it is a poaching shoemaker." Shoemaking is a great trade in that vicinity. However, news in five years once reached me that a fox had been padded there or thereabouts; so it not being much out of my way, I threw the hounds in. I had not done so a moment, when I saw by the manner of the hounds that a fox had been there, and was not far off; and suddenly before a hound spoke, though all were very busy, I saw George Carter hold up his cap to me and sit stock-still with it so. I knew very well that he viewed the fox with the hounds close round him, and feared that he would be chopped. A hound who had drawn up to his kennel spoke, and off the fox went like a shot, expedited by George's horn and holloa of "Away." Away we did go at his brush, and, instead of going to my adjacent woodlands, we crossed the brook at the bridges, and landed right well into the Pytchley open country. It was then all tip-top speed and no mistake; but we had not run more than five-and-twenty minutes, when we had an extraordinary and an abrupt check, for which there was no visible way of accounting. I am inclined to think that we were so close to him, that the fox threw himself down in a hedge, and the hounds overshot him. This suspicion made me careful not to cast too wide, and I resolved to hold them at a hand-gallop for a narrow circular cast. Siwell Wood was too far to count on as a sure point, and to deal with a narrow fact was my first duty. I held them off to the right, having seen an inclination in his line that way; and in coming round to finish the cast to the left, the hounds almost slipped up on their sides, so suddenly and full did they catch his line; and away they raced with it again, inclining to the first-mentioned direction. A field or two farther, I saw my second horse, who had come up by a fortunate green lane, the one I was on having had enough of it; and mounting him, I soon after passed Mr. Vivian, who was shooting, and who called out, "You must have him, he's just before you dead beat." A little farther on we caught sight of him a field before the pack, and from that time either George Carter, Tom Skinner, or myself had him in view till the hounds ran from scent and killed him. It was rather more than forty minutes, and as brilliant an affair as any could wish for. It cost me two



"Away we did go at his brush."

G. H. Jalland.

Facing p. 112.

guineas a minute; so it ought to have been pleasurable, for it was the first day George Carter rode a brown horse I had just purchased for eighty guineas of the Duke of Manchester; and over some fence the horse seemed to have clapped one of his hind-feet on a sharp-pointed old oaken stump, which, by the force with which he struck it, had entered between the frog, and broken in the very joint of the foot in such a way as to be beyond the power of extraction. Mr. Vivian good-naturedly put the horse into his stable, where he remained for weeks till his sufferings were put an end to.

George Carter whipped-in to me two years, and I think three times during that period it fell to his lot to hunt the hounds. On one of these occasions, I was too ill to go out; on the other two, I was detained on business. The morning that I was ill, the fixture was Moulsoe Wood: at least, that wood was the first cover within the draw; and on two or three former meets there I had found a fox, who had always beaten me. This fox always ran the same line, going from Moulsoe to Bromham by Hanger Wood, and then down to the river, nearly opposite Clapham turnpike, which he always crossed, and gained the Twin Woods. In these woods, or in Clapham Park Wood, he had ever been lucky enough to find a substitute to take the work off his shoulders, a change to a fresh fox being the only thing that could have saved him. Before George Carter left the kennel, on the morning I speak of, with the hounds, I sent for him to my bedside, and told him, if he found this fox in Moulsoe Wood, to kill him, as it would be a feather in his cap, the fox as yet having defeated us; I also said the same thing to my brother Moreton; and my brother and George Carter went out, with an assurance from the latter that he would kill the fox, if possible. The hounds had not long been thrown into Moulsoe Wood, when they opened with a crash, which, to use Carter's expression, "brought his heart into his mouth, but with the fear that, as there was such a good scent in cover, there perhaps would be a good deal less out." When I had found this fox, on not one of the occasions had we a brilliant scent;

so Carter set down the first look of the thing that day as in his favour. Round the cover the old fox went, finding that it would not do to break with the hounds with such a scent at his brush; he accordingly played the pack in the thick quarters of the wood, till the ground was foiled, and he could get an opportunity, during a check, to slip away. The chance came, and off he went, precisely fence by fence, field by field, the usual line. "Oh!" but George thought, when the hounds came to his holloa and horn with a swing, as if they knew they could take up his line in a gallop, "if the scent will but hold." Hold it did; for to Carter's delight, as the hounds swept out with their heads up, crash went every mouth at once, and away they flew, like pigeons, for Bromham. George shook himself in the saddle, and flew away with them, and, with scarcely a check, the burst lasted to the river at Clapham turnpike. No hesitation there, George saw the water fly, as the leading hounds jumped as far in as they could spring, and, speaking to it as they swam, the pack scrambled up the opposite bank, and, with no time to shake themselves, flew over the road, and up the rise to Clapham Park, like receding mops. George was at Clapham Park well with them, his heart in his mouth again, in dread of a change of foxes; but every quarter of the cover was sought in vain, so away the fox went, to look for a change in the Twin Woods. Here he sought to shift the work, as usual; but these woods also were free from change, and George knew that the hounds were running to kill, for the old hounds pressed forward, and flashed into the rides, as they endeavoured to head the cry for a view at him, he turned so short. Every instant George thought the fox was his own: the fox found he must die, if he stayed in cover; so, as a last effort, he broke again, with the hounds at his brush, and tumbled into a little drain under a gateway a few fields from the wood, and close to a farm-yard. George pulled off his cap, wiped his face, and called for spade and pick-axe. A man unused to fox-hunting would have thought that these aids were sent for to bury the animal, for every one deemed him as good as dead; the pick-axe and shovel came, and a little hole was opened mid-way between the mouths of the drain. George resolved in his own mind to do as I had often done in these short drains, to let the hounds, in the full tide of their eagerness, draw him. He stood, therefore, when the middle hole was opened, close at one end of the drain, which he had cleared from hounds, when, waving the pack back with his whip, he saw the fox looked out, but thinking it would not do, the fox drew in again. Up came Mr. Magniac and other gentlemen; and feeling some sort of respect for an animal, without reference to his pursuers, who had shown them such a run, "Oh, George," they cried, "let him out; don't murder him." George, who was always, as I said before, the best-mannered servant possible, whispered to my brother, "He can't get away, sir," and waved the hounds back a little farther, but still they stood in a semicircle not twenty yards from the drain. The fox looked out again, and, thinking it the best chance George would afford him, bolted. Instead, however, of taking to the field, he ran bang at the farm-yard gate, which was close to him, and in that farm-yard, well huddled together, was a considerable flock of sheep. The fox went under their bellies, and the hounds, topping the gate, landed on their backs, consequently all view of the fox was lost. The situation of the premises admitted of no slipping round; the only way through was by the farm-yard, and that for a time was effectually blocked by the sheep. Hounds and sheep all one on the other, the fox took that opportunity of slipping away, well trampled on and soiled by the sheep; and the sheep seeing him, burst the hurdles that were tied across the exit from the yard, and went scampering over the field after him. One hurdle only giving way, it was some moments before the wedged-up muttons permitted a horseman to get through. The hounds never hit their fox again, and George Carter returned without the laurels I bid him win. To my question of why he did not let the hounds, who richly deserved him, draw him, George said, "He wished to oblige the gentlemen, without, as he thought, any chance of being beaten, and so lost his fox." I replied, "I wish a similar chance may be given me!"

In the passage of time, Moulsoe again came in for its turn; and as we went to the meet, we agreed that, as the fox had been so near death, we should not find him there again. Taking advantage of the wind, I put the hounds in; a tongue well known to me spoke, another and another, and the hounds were in full cry in the wood about the usual place. The scent was a holding one, but nothing near brilliant; and a few turns in the cover having been taken, off went our old friend again, fence by fence, field by field, as usual, and down to the river. This time when he came to the Ouse, the waters being much out, he turned to the left, and coasted the flood, till he came to a bank and hedgerow of one of the immersed meadows, which ran out for a considerable distance into the waters, high and dry. The instant I saw the width of water, I doubted if the fox would attempt it; but the field, thinking of course the fox, as usual, would keep his line (though, if he had, the hounds would never have followed him), all galloped round to the bridges. The hounds checked for a moment, and then hit the fox along the top of the high bank before mentioned, pushing each other off it and into the water, there not being room for more than one or a couple of hounds a-breast. On they went, till they came to the end of the fence, which was then mastered by the deeper water and strong current, and I saw the fox rise before them, and spring into the water. The hounds were at him, and seized him in a moment; and having worried him, in the scramble the dead fox sank. On seeing this, I recalled the hounds; and well knowing that some of the men who hunted with me would try to deny the death of the fox, I sent my second horseman to the miller at Oakley Mill, to tell him to watch well his gates, particularly when he raked them clear of the debris of the flood; for he, in all probability, would find a dead fox that I that day had killed. The following morning being a hunting-day, I was from home early; and among the field, the question was, "Why, Berkeley, why did you not come round with the hounds?" "Because," I replied, "I had nothing to come across the water for." "Why, the fox," they said, "was sure to be gone to Clapham Park; so we all went round." I then told them I had killed him; which assertion was met by dubious shakes of the head, although I told them I saw the hounds catch him and drown him. "Where's his brush?" said one. "In the water with him," I replied, "where you may fish for it." After a good deal of joking about it, the matter dropped; we had a good day's sport; and when I returned to Harrold, the miller had brought the body of our old friend, which, sure enough, had been carried to the bars of the flood-gate put to keep back the weeds. It was not a satisfactory triumph; but so ended the Moulsoe fox.

I found a fox at Knuston Hall, where that good old sportsman, Sir Peter Payne, then resided, who took me an unusual line over the open for Yardley Chase, selecting, in his line, several cottage gardens and odd places, sheepfolds, etc. He bothered me much with repeated checks, with little to guide me in guessing where he was going, and eventually, after a good run, beat me. Some time afterwards I found him at Knuston again, and he broke from the spinnies, across a small grass ground, into one very large, in which was a flock of sheep scattered on their feed. The hounds were coming on his line down the spinny, so I cantered after him across the small field, and stopped, and watched him through the sheep. He went for the thickest of the foil, and all the sheep ran after him: however, I knew the spot where he again got on fresh ground; and when the hounds checked in the middle of the field, as I guessed they would, I was at no loss for the quickest way in putting them right. The run was just like the former one: every sort of difficulty was put between him and the hounds; but knowing something of his line, and the scent being a trifle better, I contrived to have very little delay. As I cast for a cottage garden, an old woman stood there, who cried out, "Here, sir, the fox is gone over the same corner of the wall he did last time you were here;" and sure enough, in a dozen different places, the fox had passed the same foot of ground. When we had left the difficulties behind, and had got into the large fields, whence I could see the fish-ponds at Castle Ashby, and the back of the house, the hounds ran hard, and I could see that they were getting near their fox. At one time, I thought he intended trying the village of Bozeat, and so getting up to the Bozeat and Harrold Woods; but though he turned that way, he soon resumed his point; and the hounds threw up from a racing pace, as if the scent had vanished, at the lodge at the entrance of the park at Castle Ashby. Sitting still, while they made their own cast, I saw my brother Moreton hold up his cap, and point with his whip into the sunk fence. I favoured then the circular cast of the hounds, and they put their fox out of the "haha," and killed him. It was a fine run, and a satisfactory thing altogether.

George Carter, to whom I have before referred, came to me from a slow state of things which then existed in the hunting establishment of the Duke of Grafton:—a slack huntsman and slack hounds, the hounds bred without much judgment, and faults in respective natures overlooked, till breeding in and in had confirmed them as a part of the hound's capacity. I have seen the Duke of Grafton's hounds, old and long established as they were, tie on the scent, and hang to hares, and that, too, with the line of a fox before them. There are peculiar days in March when I have seen the steadiest hound speak when crossing the line of a hare, although he would not have run her at a view; and at times it is difficult for a hound, in some states of the atmosphere, to distinguish one scent from another. I give an instance of this, known to George Carter as well as myself. My famous hound, Harrogate, one of the best and steadiest and most sensible hounds that ever existed, was heard by us, in a wood called Lousacre, to speak, and to double his tongue. No other hound spoke; and the tongue approached towards Carter, when down a hare's run came a cock-pheasant: the pheasant saw Carter, and rose; Harrogate came after him, and, when he came to the spot where the pheasant had risen, threw up, and began drawing again. I am also convinced that in March, when hares are clicketing, their scent is stronger than that of a fox. Among the many things that are worthy of remark, as beautiful facts in the arrangement of nature, to save the mother and her offspring, are those as to the vixen fox when heavy with cubs, and the brooding hen-pheasant when on her eggs. I have seen hounds, when they could scarce own the line of a heavy vixen, rattle merrily away on the dog fox; and I have known hen-pheasants sit on their eggs undisturbed, and safely hatch, within a foot of a ride, wherein the cubs were in the habit of playing, and up which the old foxes passed frequently. Of this I am also sure, that scents differ in different foxes, and that a pack may divide, be simultaneously running over similar lands, and the scent with the one and the other be widely different. In illustration of the instances I have seen, I offer a day with my hounds at Haleweston. My two men went after the smallest body of hounds, to stop and turn them back to me: each had a fox before them. They could not stop the smaller body, in cover or out of cover, the scent was so brilliant; but after a beautiful burst, they were stopped, and the fox before them saved, by his having been coursed by a sheep-dog. In the meantime, I had a long, slow run with a multitude of checks, with my brother to assist me, and, at the end of two hours, hunted down and killed the fox. While in the cover, where we found at one and the same moment, this variety of scent existed, and continued when we each went away. My father's huntsman, Tom Oldaker, always said, the most unerring sign he ever knew of there being no scent was when the gossamer-webs, in lines, stretched thickly over the grass. I have seen an exception to that rule; and indeed there is no sort of weather that I have not known a scent to exist in, or not to exist in. "A southerly wind, and a cloudy sky," may do very well for a song; but I am convinced that there is a greater tendency to scent in a clear, harsh, north and north-east wind. When rain is in the air, to come, *but not yet come*, that is against a scent; the rain down, even without a change of wind, and the chance of scent is better.

I once saw in cover a tremendous scent in a deep snow, thus: A heavy fall of snow had so cumbered the great woods, and lain, from the severity of subsequent frost, that in Odell and the Harrold Woods it was up to a man's knees. On finding it did not ball, and the hounds and men could run and ride among it very well, I took my entire pack, of about sixty couples of hounds, up to Odell Great Wood, and found a fox. It was a still, clear day; and oh, what a cry! In places where the snow had drifted, the hounds yelled in their impatience to get through, and they worked their fox for an hour, as if they had been tied to him. To save himself, he broke for Lousacre; and the instant he was out of cover, from the finest scent I ever saw on the other side the ditch, landed in the open, not a hound could own the line. I made my first cast on the pads of the fox in the snow. Through Lousacre, the hounds ran again like mad; but the instant the fox broke on the Colworth side, it was all up again. I therefore cast back for the wood, in the hope of another fox; but not finding one, I went home, the purpose of keeping my hounds in wind having been answered. This hunt, in so deep a snow, was a curious and a beautiful thing to see and hear.

George Carter came to me at a lucky time. The pack was made, and powerful from its activity, resolution, and youth, the sport increased every day; and, as I said before, I was in clover. George was with me two seasons, when one day Lord James Fitzroy paid a visit to my kennel. He said nothing whatever to me; but after he left, George Carter, to my surprise, informed me that his lordship had made him the offer of the huntsman's place under his Grace of Grafton, as Rose was about to be discharged. When George told me this he added, "They have heard, sir, of our sport, but I fear I should not give them satisfaction unless I could take your hounds with me." I confess that I was not a little angry at the way in which the offer was made, but, as I had a very good opinion of George, as well as a wish that he should look to his own interests, I told him that the Duke of Grafton's place was more likely to be a permanent one than mine; for I foresaw that the parliamentary duties which I had undertaken, and the state of West Indian affairs, together, would prevent my continuing my hounds, or at least render their continuance uncertain; and therefore it was decidedly George Carter's interest to leave me. George being unwilling to go, I added that if an additional twenty pounds to his wages would bring my service anything near the duke's, I should be glad to retain him; but if it did not, for his own sake, he had better at once accept Lord James's proposition. He told me that there was at least a hundred pounds difference between the two situations; so, by my advice, and with my full consent, he succeeded Rose as huntsman to the Duke of Grafton, in which service he remained till the hounds were given up; he was then engaged by Mr. Ashheton Smith, in whose service he continues. Tom Skinner's brother, Harry Skinner, then came to me from the Worcestershire hounds, and Tom resumed the first place. Harry was a willing, good-humoured fellow, not afraid of work; and though I missed George Carter sadly, no alteration took place in my sport nor in the number of foxes killed; and all, as far as sport was concerned, continued "merry as a marriage bell."

## CHAPTER VII

> "First let the kennel be the huntsman's care,
> Upon some little eminence erect,
> And fronting to the ruddy dawn; its courts
> On either hand wide opening to receive
> The sun's all-cheering beams, when mild he shines
> And gilds the mountain tops."—SOMERVILLE.

THERE is no place where the breeding or care of foxhound puppies, at their walks, is managed so well as at Berkeley Castle; at least no place that has ever come within my observation where such strict rules are so widely maintained. The tenants are obliged to walk one or two puppies, according to the extent of their farms; and the gamekeeper, within whose district they are, is expected to visit those puppies and report if they are not going on well, or, in other words, if they have not their liberty, or do not look fat and happy. This constant care and observation is of the utmost service, not only in the rearing of fine puppies, but to the public at large; not only to the hunting public, but to all; for as a hundred couples of puppies, more or less, are sent forth to range the fields every year, till the period comes of returning them full-grown to the kennel, if they were neglected, and hydrophobia should break out, it is impossible to conceive the damage that might occur to man and beast! The precaution adopted, and this keen surveillance, I have not a doubt saved my kennel at Harrold, and perhaps myself, as well as my men, from considerable danger. When my entry for the year was sent to Harrold from Berkeley Castle, the man who brought them delivered to me a letter, stating that there had been a mad dog through the Vale of Berkeley, which had bitten several things; and among the animals he was seen to assault was a foxhound puppy sent to me, but whose name at this moment I forget. This puppy he had run at and knocked over, but though he had run against him, on the closest examination no bite could be found, and not an erasure of the skin nor anything like it. The puppy was a promising one, and with this caution I received him. Orders were given by me to my men to watch the young hound well, and to report at once if they saw the slightest change in health or disposition. I not only always fed my hounds myself, but it was my custom every day to play with the young hounds and make them handy to their names, to kennel usage, and to couples. In fact, teaching them to distinguish a look of approbation and a word of praise from a frown or a gruff chide in anger: with a long kennel gown on, reaching from my chin to my foot, they were welcome to leap up and pull me about as much as they pleased; in this familiar way it was astonishing the ascendency, without a blow, that I soon obtained over them. I was sitting on their bedstead, caressing those that sought me, and watching others in their graceful play, my eye always open to the caution as to the mad dog; when before I had been in the kennel five minutes I perceived that the puppy, as to whom I had received the letter, refused to play with any of the others, and without seeming to have anything the matter with him looked bored (that is the best description I can give of it) with his fellows when they invited him to a romp. That instant I put a pair of couples round his neck, and placed him apart from all the rest, giving him at the same time a gentle dose of physic in case the apparent dulness or drooping was occasioned by passing indisposition. Several times during that day I visited him, and towards the evening the hound became decidedly dull and out of all spirits, but without showing any other symptom of distress; this might have been occasioned by the physic, but still I had other apprehensions. On the following morning the hound was gloomy, dejected, and had a heavy look about the eyes; he knew me and wagged his stern when I spoke to him, and fed a little, and also drank water, but not more than a lap or two. In the evening of that day he rejected both food and water; still there are phases of the distemper so like hydrophobia that I hoped for the best, though my suspicions were of the worst description. The following morning cleared up every doubt upon the subject: the hound at first became ill at ease and could not sleep, he moaned occasionally, and his eyes had a greenish-glassy or shining appearance, when subjected to the reflection of light, much as one has seen a fox's eyes look in the dark in a short earth or drain, when gazing towards the orifice by which he had entered, only there was in the hound's eyes a ray, if it may be so called, that conjured up the thought of the devil. I left him for about an hour, and when I returned he was lying, in the position of a sphinx, at the extreme length of his chain from the dish that held his water. The instant I raised the water he became full of apprehension or suspicion, so, by way of an experiment to satisfy myself, I took a little of the water in my hand and sprinkled it on his nose, drawing the chain that held him through the ring so that I could prevent his reaching me in any wish to bite. The instant he heard the water and saw it coming, almost before it touched him, he was convulsed, crying in an angry or convulsive manner, and biting at his chain. On the removal of the water he relapsed into a sullen dejected state, and, unless approached by water, in that sort of lethargy he remained, occasionally moaning, till he died, which I think happened about the fourth or fifth day after my first perceiving that he was dull. Had this hound been let loose, I have no doubt but that exercise, increasing the circulation, would have incited to violence, and that he would have run through the country biting all he came near; I do not think that had I sat within reach of his chain throughout the malady, that he would have bitten me, unless under delirious spasm produced by the touch of water. I have seen it asserted that dogs in a rabid state of hydrophobia have been known to lap water; this assertion is erroneous: if they have no hatred to, nor dread of water, their disease is not hydrophobia, but they are *rabid* from some other cause. In different phases of distemper that disease will make a dog rabid, and induce him to snap at and bite everything that is in motion near him, from a stick in a man's hand to any living animal. The eyes of dogs so suffering resemble those of a dog under hydrophobia, and they are subject to similar paroxysms, to dulness and stupor, and when not thirsty, if water, or indeed if anything was thrown at them, they would be violent and bite, but not from any repugnance to the element. Dogs in this state, a state of fever and internal inflammation, will lap water ravenously, and for a quarter of an hour at a time, with very little power of swallowing, and in doing so will cover the water with frothy saliva. I have seen the dish from which they were lapping filled with froth and foam, and observed but very little diminution in the fluid. I have also known them to swallow water to a great extent. In giving one of these dogs, a greyhound, some physic, my man John Dewey, now head keeper at Pilewell, had a cut on his thumb, which he contrived to get well filled by the saliva from the dog's mouth, and the fact gave him for a time considerable mental uneasiness. I bade him wash it well, and told him I would insure him from any serious consequences, for the distemper in a dog never yet made anybody mad but their master. Those dogs so affected, generally speaking, recovered, and a dog I saw them bite was never any the worse for it. On dissection, those that died proved to be in a violent inflammatory state, extending from the windpipe to the lungs, intestines, and liver; the brain and the heart being alone untouched by the disease. There is no specific cure for the distemper, and no rule can be laid down for its treatment, because the symptoms are so various and uncertain that the remedy which might cure in one instance would kill in another; the lancet, seton, blister, and active dose being called for in one periodical attack, and quinine, sago, arrowroot, and every sort of dainty that can provoke appetite or sustain strength, in the other. Sometimes the distemper comes out in an eruption of the skin, *and that is the safest turn it can take.* The treatment which I recommend is, to watch the disease, and at every turn of it assist nature whenever she points the way.

The advice which, at the commencement of these Reminiscences, I presumed to offer to young sportsmen I found it very difficult to act up to when my privacy was disturbed at Harrold by the request to stand for the western division of Gloucestershire. No man enjoyed society more than I did, and, until I went to Harrold, I had never missed a London season. My fortune, under West India failures, would not admit of a London season *and* a pack of foxhounds; so, as I advise every man to do, in spite of the contempt made famous by Lord Chesterfield's wish to the barking cur-dog, that "he was married and settled in the country," when a man marries, if he has to make a selection for all the year round, let him adopt the country life. I did so, and a right happy life it was and is; and, when the proposition came that I should contest the county, I had never been to London for more than a day or so for five years. The proposition came to me first from Colonel Berkeley, and, making no disguise of my reluctance, I firmly declined. My reasons were asked, and I stated them fairly, that I was reluctant to break in upon my retired life, to incur fresh expenses, and to risk the loss of my hounds. This only brought to me further entreaties, with an assurance that my public position should not cost me a farthing. I had already, on the passing of the Reform Bill, taken some local lead in politics, by proposing the late Lord Ducie, then Mr. Henry Moreton, to represent the whole county for the passing of that measure, and, also, at another election, the nomination of Mr. Hanbury Tracey, now Lord Sudeley, for Tewkesbury. Mr. Henry Moreton succeeded, but Mr Tracey was at that time defeated. Well, my old maxim, that a man should not on account of favourite recreations give up more refined accomplishments, nor cease to aspire to the noblest things in life, had weight with me then; and that maxim, backed by the most ardent wish of Colonel Berkeley and others of my family, made me acquiesce, the only stipulation being that he should make an addition to my income. By these means I hoped to be able to retain my hounds, and, without much infringement on the sport to which I was so fondly attached, faithfully to represent a powerful constituency, while, at the same time, I enabled him, by the support his purse afforded to Lord John Russell's party, to win the titles that, on certain conditions having to do with elections, the Whigs were ready to assign him. Alas! the step I then took to please was a stone rolled up hill to fall back on my own head, and, if not to crush me, still to occasion me both trouble and unhappiness. I only deal with this matter so far as it regards the maintenance of my hounds. The election in 1832 took place. Mr. Henry Moreton, against the wish of the late Colonel Kingscote, and many of those who styled themselves Liberals, declared that he would stand with me, and, though I was remonstrated with for doing so, I persisted in the declaration that, if he or any other eligible person came forward on similar principles to mine, I could do nothing else than take him by the hand. The result of the election was, that I came in at the head of the poll, and Mr. Augustus Moreton ahead by a small majority over Lord Edward Somerset.

There were no railways in those days, so I became a constant passenger by Mr. Whitbread's coach, driven by Crow, backwards and forwards to London. At times, when a division took place in the House of Commons late at night, or rather early in the morning, I had my carriage ready to post down to the fixture. I did this once, with my hack to meet me at the Cock at Eaton on the great north road, the fixture being at Haleweston, the day terminating in a very good run. Faith was not kept with me, by one whose word I had taken, and I very soon found that my public liabilities were not borne as promised by a larger purse than mine; I complained, but could get no redress, when, at last, the painful choice was forced upon me, either to resign my place in Parliament or to give up my hounds. Hard and long was the struggle between the alternatives; but, at last, the desire to aid a brother at all risks and privations, as well as to continue to represent the division of the county in which I was born, overcame every other consideration, and I determined to sell my hounds. I knew this was not the happiest course for me, but it was the course, perhaps, of duty, at least it was not selfish.

At this time Mr. Osbaldeston resigned the Pytchley country, and Mr. Wilkins was in treaty for it. I think it was Mr. Payne who advised Mr. Wilkins to apply to me to buy my hounds. The sad day arrived, and I took him into the kennel. In selling them I could not find in my heart to let them all go beyond my reach, in case I should keep hounds again; so I made an odd sort of arrangement with him. I sold him the entered hounds, and gave him the unentered, on condition that, if I claimed them at the close of any season, half of each entry of each succeeding season were to be mine. The moment I conversed with Mr. Wilkins, and saw the sort of sportsman or otherwise that he was, there were a few favourite hounds I resolved not to let him have. One of these was Harrogate. Harrogate and some others I gave to the Duke of Grafton, knowing that under George Carter they would be well cared for and rendered happy, their use and beautiful attainments in the field being thoroughly known to their huntsman. One of the bitches, a one-year hunter, that I sold to Mr. Wilkins, returned home in a few days, and never would remain in his kennel. Poor dear old Harrogate! the noble hound is fresh in my remembrance now. He died at a good old age here at Beacon Lodge, and assisted me to kill the first brace of otters I ever found in the New Forest. In my mind's eye I see him now come flashing out into the ride in Puddington Great Hayes, on the second cub he had ever seen found. We had killed one that morning in Colworth Thick; the cub was beaten, turning very short, and Harrogate had evidently just had a view at him. He dashed into the ride, his stern lashing his sides in his beautiful style of hunting, and looked up and down for the cub, and then into cover again. Harrogate entered at once, as almost all the Berkeley Castle-bred litters do, and for this reason—their walks are full of hares and rabbits, and they begin to hunt as soon as they can run.

What beautiful, jolly things those puppies are! I give the reader a picture of them. It is a beautiful autumn eve in September, the weather like summer, as if that season, seated on the blue mountains of Wales, and the nearer hills of the Forest of Dean, robed in the rays of the western sun, was taking a last lingering look on the ruddy Severn and the deep rich emerald vale beyond. The banner on the Castle tower sleeps around its staff, or idly stirs as the congregating wings of swallows and martins, with their merry chirping, flit around it. There is scarce a breath of air, the hares and rabbits come out to feed, and the vale re-echoes with the near and distant and mellowed lowings of the milch-cows answering to the call of the farmers' daughters or of their male and female servants. The atmosphere is perfumed by the sweet breath of kine mingled with the fragrance which arises from the bruised fresh grass over which they pass, and the ruddy fruit of the orchards. There is a beautiful girl with her pail on her head! She would not shame a drawing-room; and see, before her trot two fat, sleek, foxhound puppies, their dappled coats as soft as a mole-skin, and their wrinkled faces, full eyes, and trailing ears expressive of sagacity and content. They tumble through the stile by the footboard, being too young to jump; one of them slips into the ditch, and is extracted by the graceful girl, who stoops to pull him out without casting the pail from her head, when on they go again. The favourite cow is milked first, and, while the full pails of the farmer's daughter and her attendants are rattling and frothing up in their milky treasures, the two puppies wander together in the grass. A delicious odour then assails their nose—it arises from a fine old hare who has not yet left her form. Cautiously they venture, or the boldest of them alone at first, to smell her; up she jumps, and the puppies, uttering a short suppressed bark, for it does not amount to a bay, retreat towards their young mistress. Her forehead is still pressed against the cow, but she turns her healthful cheek, and laughingly asks the puppies, "What is the matter?" Emboldened by finding that the hare has not pursued them, they return to her form, her scent is agreeable, and they trace it. One puppy gets lost in the long grass, or falls into a concealed grip, so the other speaks or calls to him to come on and help him to trace the line of scent which the great red thing had left, that frightened them.

Thus does the hunting of a Berkeley foxhound commence, and to that, as well as to the great care taken in breeding them, do I attribute their proficiency in hunting. I do not say it from any prejudice to the sort, but I have found them, generally speaking, to enter much more quickly than puppies from other kennels, and become steadier sooner. In entering hounds who have been reared on walks where there is little or nothing to hunt, you have first to teach them to hunt hares before you can break them off it, when, as a puppy whose hunting is already perfected, although at the wrong scent, soon sees the difference between a hare and fox, and, checked from the one and encouraged on the other, perfection and steadiness are very soon attained. It is the making of a foxhound to be reared among hares, and the ruin of a greyhound whelp to be near them. As the time approaches when the Berkeley-bred young hounds are to be brought into their kennel, you hear them hunting in packs, joining each other from the different farms, and killing an infinity of hares. They have also been known to run down foxes. It is a curious scene to see the young hounds come home as it were from school. Here is one, a fine bold dog, led in a string and trotting along with every imaginable confidence, well acquainted with the farmer's man who leads him. There another, a sleek, petted, and beautiful bitch, for the loss of whom the farmer's daughters are in tears; she hates to leave the fostering care of the farm and refuses to walk, so she arrives at the kennel on the shoulders of a labourer, her four legs held in front of him, her stomach on the back of his neck, while her graceful head nods to the variation of his footstep. Seventy couple of puppies have come in, and it is amusing to stand among them and read in their actions and faces the variety of their dispositions.

There is not more study afforded by the physiognomy of a school of boys and girls. Here is a group of careless creatures at a game of boisterous play; while in corners sit the timid, as well as those regretful of the friends they have left behind. Others walk about in surly moods and challenge their new acquaintances to fight; while the more forward ones begin to make love to the ladies. But hush, while we contemplate those that are still arriving. There is a scuffle at the kennel door! A man appears, very hot, having, as he assures us, "had a deuce of a job to get the puppy along." He had to carry him, on his thumb it would seem, for there is a deep gash in it where the holders of the puppy have met. The old boiler Curnoch looks at it, and, because he boils horses and lives among hounds, he is deemed "to know summut of bites." Curnoch takes the wounded labourer to the boiling house, sends to the stable for some hot horse-oils, pours a spoonful into the wound and rubs it well in, fastens up the lips of the scar with some cobblers' wax, sticks on a bit of old cord breeches, and binds it tight with some tar twine. The man then repairs to the Castle, gets a skinful of stronger ale and cider than he is in the habit of drinking, with a lot of cold meat, and rises to his work next morning cool and comfortable!

Harrogate was a great favourite of Mrs. Berkeley's, and when at exercise in the field at Harrold, where the rookery on the lime tree is, he would break away from the pack, leap the haha on to the lawn, and go round to the drawing-room window for a biscuit or a bason of sopped bread, and then return to me or my men, who, if I was not there, were ordered to let him do so. When Mrs. Berkeley attended, either in the carriage or on horseback, to see the hounds throw off, Harrogate always left the pack to acknowledge her; and this led, for years after, to a curious circumstance often seen with the Duke of Grafton's hounds. When the meet was at any popular spot, and was attended by ladies in carriages, a fine lengthy grey-pied hound, unchided by whipper-in, was seen to quit the pack, and gallop up to the carriage in which he distinguished, at a distance, the female dress. The affectionate old hound used to gallop from the pack with a joyful action, which betokened a mind full of hope; but, alas! when by circling round the carriage he had ascertained that Mrs. Berkeley was not there, his sullen trot, as he returned, was strangely at variance with his former behaviour. George Carter knew his object, and never interfered with it. I met the Duke of Grafton's hounds in the chase some time after I had parted with mine; the meeting between me and Harrogate was beautiful, and at the close of the day the old dog singled himself out from the pack to accompany me home; but, alas! it could not be.

## CHAPTER VIII

> "Grief's tearful frown upon the landscape lours;
> I've lost the comrades of my leisure hours."

Having made the before-mentioned arrangement with Mr. Wilkins, and seen my hounds depart for the Pytchley kennel, I could not bear to look on the deserted doors at home. When, after a time, I did go into the kennel, there were a thousand remembrances to make me melancholy. Where were the rows of attached and sensible faces that used to stand or sit in the yard round the feeding-house door, each to wait till I called them to their dinner?—every hound always on one particular spot, and one at the door, kissing the whip in my hand, and asking it to touch her head, to signal her in, but not attempting to pass as the door opened to some light feeder whom I had called before her;—a hundred and twenty silent and submissive creatures, every one knowing his or her particular name, and distinguishing that name, though others had appellations that sounded like it, and though hungry and full of animal anxiety to feed, not one attempting to pass the constantly opening door till called by name to do so. There was the bench on which they slept so comfortably on their clean wheaten straw, lapped the one over the other, like a Chinese puzzle made of hounds, after they came home from hunting, and where, after cub-hunting, having had my breakfast, I used to pay them a visit, their coats scarcely dry of the woodland dew, and smelling so sweetly of the aroma of the wild plants they had crushed in forcing their way through the thickets at the brush of a fox.

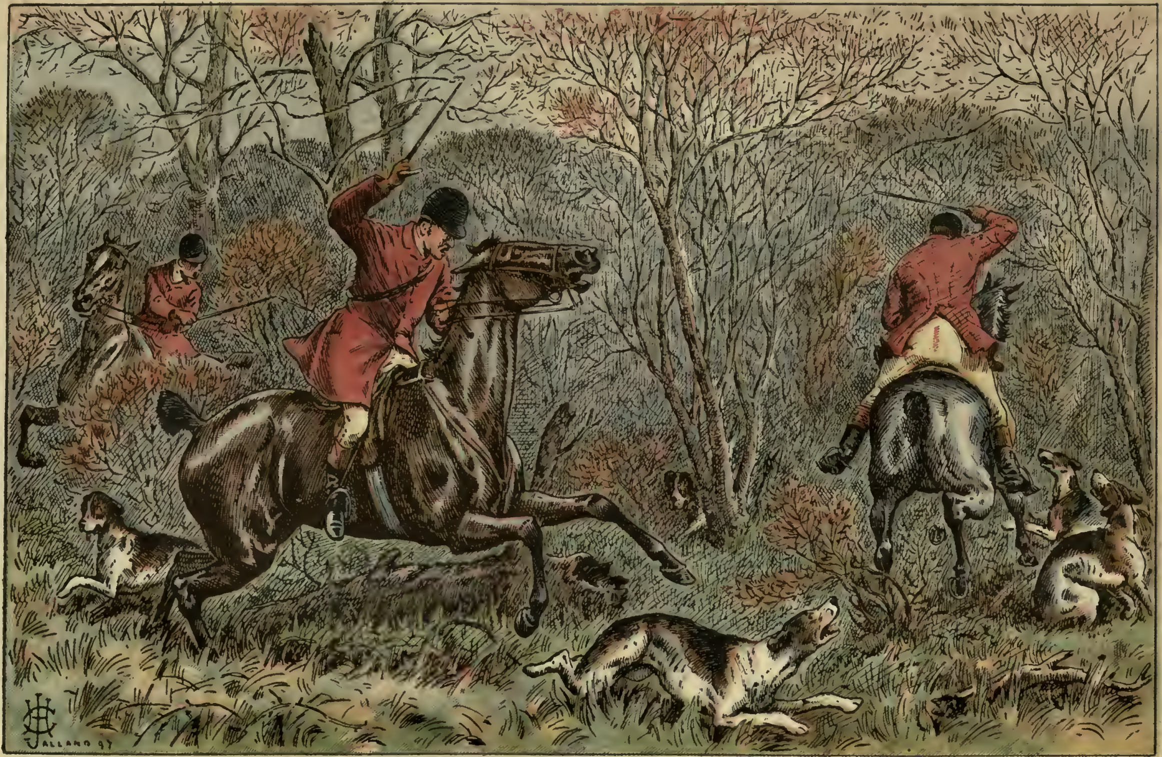
Every part of the kennel reminded me of some beautiful favourite, severed from me for ever, and for a time I hated the sight of those lonely buildings. The worst of it was yet to come. Though I had sold my hunting hounds, and parted conditionally from the puppies, I could not refrain from a desire to see them work in their new country, said to be a better scenting country than Bedfordshire, and, when cub-hunting began, at Mr. Wilkins's suggestion I repaired to a lodging at Brigstock, near the kennel. I had not seen the hounds for some months, and they were on their road to cover when I came up, and overtook them. The air went the wrong way for them to wind me, and as they seemed to have no particular attachment to the men they were with, but trotted rather behind the horse of the first whipper-in than *with* their huntsman, Jack Stephens, I joined Jack, and looked them over before they were aware of my presence. I soon saw that flogging had been the order of the day, for there were weals on the coats of hounds who never had had a blow with me, and never deserved it; and a number of them that used to trot along the road in an airy, bold manner, now jogged along like culprits, head and stern both down, looking as if they were sullenly going mad, or going anywhere save to a free and joyous chase: it was at once evident to me why Bribery, the hound before alluded to, had run away. One bitch in particular, a great favourite of mine, who used to play with me, and understand me like a parlour-dog, looked the very picture of sorrow; and, guessing the effect a word I used to use to her in play would have on her, I let my horse walk out till I came near enough for her to hear me. In doing this, a busy whine and brightening-up of the hounds that recognised me as I passed, with a joyful bay or two, loudly repressed by Jack Stephens — as if there was no difference between a hound's flinging his tongue for joy and babbling on a scent—might be heard: it had no effect, though, on the bitch under notice; she was too sad to heed anything but her forlorn situation. On approaching the poor woe-begone thing, I let her hear the word "tah," prolonged and spoken as a nurse may do to a child. I never saw such an effect as it had! She heard it, and started; looked here, there, and everywhere, as if she disbelieved her senses. I repeated the word, and she ran round me, to assure herself that it was me, and then she jumped on to the pommel of my saddle. Up went her pretty crest and stern for the rest of that day; and after her greeting to me she ran up to almost every hound in the pack, growling, and with her bristles up, as if telling them that I had arrived. Alas! I soon saw that I had better have broken through my attachment to my hounds at once, than have gone into the Pytchley country, to have seen them mismanaged and ill-used without the means of averting it. Once, in going to cover, I overtook Jack playing on his horn, a thing he used to do on every possible occasion. On asking him "what was the matter?" he said, he had heard of Sentinel. Now Sentinel was about as good and steady a hound, when I sold him, as a huntsman ever cheered, though a little shy among strangers. I forget the precise number of seasons I had hunted him, but he was as perfect a foxhound as it was possible to be. Having asked how and when Sentinel came to be away, he said, "he had bolted one day from the kennel door," and though he had been seen, the instant he saw a red coat he was off like a shot. The fact was, they had been knocking the hounds about in kennel and out of kennel, there being a great deal more beer than brains, at times, under the caps and hats of that establishment, in addition to considerable ignorance in the treatment of hounds. The return of the one-year-hunted bitch, Bribery, to my kennel from the Pytchley, and their declared inability to retain her, was now fully accounted for; and the more accounted for still, when I gave her to Mr. Dansey, whose kennel was but about five miles from my house, instead of upwards of twenty, with whom she ever afterwards remained. So roughly had Sentinel been used, that the very sight of anything like a red coat drove him at once into the Brigstock forest. Jack had tried to reclaim him by taking out the hounds to where he had last heard of him, naturally enough thinking that Sentinel would join his own companions, when, if he had, I have not the least doubt but that the moment Jack or Webb could have caught him, *they would have flogged him for running away!* But Sentinel would not hear of them at any price; and after some absence, when I returned, in October, to Brigstock, Sentinel remained wild. I had often looked for him: wild and timid as he was, confirmed, indeed, in the habits of a wild beast, I felt sure, if I could get the voice to him which had never mentioned his name but to cheer him for doing well, or spoken to him but in play, before he began to fly from the now-dreaded presence of man, that he would have come to me; but, unluckily, I never saw him but once or twice, and then at a distance, while he was flying from the presence of the dreaded red coat. From the Ladies Fitzpatrick, at Farming Woods, Mrs. Berkeley and myself, in our stay at Brigstock, received every kindness and attention, and I had leave to shoot partridges when I pleased, and often shot pheasants in the covers with the keeper. One day, the last on which I ever set eyes on poor Sentinel, I was shooting pheasants in the deer forest to the keeper's team of spaniels; a rush through the underwood came towards me, and first a black cat, and then Sentinel, looking perfectly wild, came into the ride about forty yards' distance from where I stood. He scarcely paused, and yet he heard the voice of old, for I shall never forget the sudden look, with ears erect, he gave me when I called to him by name. Unluckily, the report of my gun, when I killed the cat, and then the spaniels chasing him, continued him in his panic-stricken flight, and I never heard of him again.

I did my best to reason with Jack on the nature and treatment of hounds, but it did no good. "Mr. Brag," mentioned in Mr. Sponge's *Sporting Tour*, and again in Jorrock's *Handley Cross Hunt*, dressed very like Jack, and used in some cases similar expressions; and he would as soon have learned anything from Lord Scamperdale as Jack would from me; so I gave up all remonstrance. Jack was only fitted, while I knew him, for a second whipper-in. In the course of my

Reminiscences I am aware of a scene with the Pytchley hounds precisely similar to that which happened with Sir Harry Scattercashe's, in regard to leaving the hounds to take care of themselves on a hunting-day. It was one in the morning before all got home, luncheon having made hounds, men, and, they told me, horses, totally independent on each other. I remember the first time I ever saw Jack Stephens in the field was when he was with Mr. Osbaldeston. Mr. Gaskill was out, who once rode a magnificent burst with me, when with my hounds at Cranford I found an outlying stag, that I think had escaped from one of my barns where I kept them, to the woods about Pinner. We ran straight over the Harrow Vale for Hayes, and each of us stopped our horses. I mention the presence of this gentleman, to tell a very funny thing said to him that day by "the Squire." It was a vixen fox, very heavy, that the hounds were running; she ran very short, and the Squire was sharp for her death; he did something in aid of it, when Mr. Gaskill said, in a voice of deprecation, "Oh, Squire, Squire, it's a V." "Well, d—n me!" cried Mr. Osbaldeston, "what of that? there are W's enough left for you."

They killed that fox, and I thought I never saw anything so slack and spiritless as the giving of the fox to the hounds, or anything much more indifferent than the hounds were about her. Jack set his foot on the fox in the middle of a field, and rated any hound who came near him; and having padded and brushed her, took her carelessly up, held her over his head, holloaed to the hounds, and when they were only half around him, tossed her down. It was as much as they would do to break her up. This carelessness on the death of a fox is bad; a huntsman, for the sake of his hounds, can't *quickly* make too much of him; he should not be long about it, but what he did do should appear to be done with delight, and the hounds should be roused to excitement. I always placed my back against a tree, or hedge, and waving the hounds back with a whip, but never hitting one hard, I cheered them all the time my man was cutting off the brush and pads, and scalping the fox; this kept up the animal anxiety to have him. I then took the fox by the neck and shook him, while I cheered them, in their faces; and when they were all gathered round me, and raging to get hold of him, I tossed the fox among them. This plan I followed from having observed, in my younger days, that Colonel Berkeley always did it; and from observation of the good effect it had. I defy a man to have set his foot on a fox, with my hounds, in the middle of a field, without their snatching him away, unless he had double-thonged them all into an abstinence through terror; and I am convinced that there are two ways of giving a fox to hounds, the one, slack and improper, and the other, most useful. As I have always said, there is nothing that takes example so much as a hound does from his huntsman, or adopts so completely the method of the man who rules. While I knew Jack Stephens, I never saw anything fast in him but his whip and spurs, his haste often occasioning delay; his hounds never grew fond of him, and he had no "dog language." When I saw him with Mr. Osbaldeston (the latter, I think, was often on a pony), it was all hurry, horn and holloa, quick finds in gorses, short bursts, no perseverance; but on being thwarted or checked, the words were, "Give it up and find another with a better scent." The hounds, therefore, so far as I saw their actions, partook of their huntsman, and they were all for a race; and then "heads up" was the word for the horn or holloa. In saying this I don't disparage the hounds, for they had in them the old Monson blood; and I have tried in my own kennel the stock of Mr. Osbaldeston's Racer, Chorister, Bluecap, Rocket, and Vanguard, Flourisher, Sailor, Factor, and Conqueror; and than those from Chorister nothing could be better. Jack's hounds, when I saw them, were like him; they were all haste as long as they could see; flight and spur, whip and horn, and then a "devil of a pause:" they gathered it from the man who taught them. My good friend Mr. William Wyndham's hounds, at Dinton, learned the most calm and gentlemanly conduct from their huntsman and master; they scorned to take any advantage of a fox, and if the fox forgot himself, and turned short among them, they would not lay hold of him, it not being deemed by them according to etiquette to meet a fox face to face and catch him; they only laid hold of him when, by following directly on the line of his brush, he could be made weary or foolish enough to sit down and to wait for their decent approach. Many of Mr. Wyndham's hounds were from the Badminton blood, and I am sure I have seen Bill Long's pack roll up a fox the quickest way they could get at him; and, therefore, as I have ever said, it must be example, and not nature, that makes the same blood act so differently in different kennels. My hounds, I take it, never forgot what they saw me do the first year I hunted Bedfordshire. I had run a fox into a drain, I think near the Lavendon Woods, and had a deal of work to get him there: the young pack, and myself too, had had enough for one day, and they needed blood, so I resolved that we, they and myself together, should draw the fox. There were several spouts to the drain, and the drain, though in the fields, was very near the large and foiled woodland, about which there were fresh foxes. The hounds were tearing at several spouts, while a man was gone for a spade; and just as I was examining a ditch, to see that there were no other outlets, on peeping into something that looked like a drain under the grass, the fox bolted in my face, and I knocked him down with the hammer of my whip, and cast him kicking among the hounds. Upon my word, I think, that as Mr. Wyndham's hounds learned their abstinence from foxes, in a certain way, from him, mine learned to catch them quickly from what they saw me do; for often and often when I despaired of a kill, they have picked up the fox in a most extraordinary manner. To give an illustration of the wildness and want of thought of Jack Stephens, when he hunted the hounds I sold to Mr. Wilkins, there is no better specimen than the following. We had beaten a fox, and had him for some time among us in some small plantations. Jack and myself were viewing him by turns, and with a crack of our whips heading him to the hounds, who had very little scent to work with, the fox so dead beat that he only saved himself by occasionally lying down in the thick brambles under the trees, whenever they came up to him. At the instant that I was listening for a kill, Jack heard a holloa at least a mile off; "too-too-too-too," went his horn, "hark, holloa!" was the word, and away he flew, calling the hounds, all he could get, after him; "crack, crack, crack," went the whipper-ins' whips, with a "get away! get away!" and off went master and man, with the field at their tails, and a lot of hounds, about to be misled, after them. I sat still, thunderstruck that any set of men could have so little thought, particularly Jack, who was the first in fault, as to believe that a weary animal, viewed by the huntsman not two seconds before, could have left the plantation, and by taking a semicircle, which he must have done, placed himself a mile in his rear. The hubbub caused by the "too-tooing" row having subsided in the distance, and observing that several hounds still feathered around some brambles, refusing to be put away, I watched the result, and it was just what I expected; the remaining hounds killed their fox before Jack Stephens could have reached the vicinity of the supposed holloa. I got off my horse to cut off the brush and the nose for the kennel door, but my knife had made an exit for itself in my pocket, and had chosen to depart, so I let the five or six couple of hounds worry the fox, taking from them a hinder-leg, the brush which was attached to it, and the head, which I hung up in a tree, called the hounds away, and set off after the rest. I had not gone far before I met them all returning, the holloa having come from a man scaring rooks. "Where have you been?" said Mr. Wilkins; "we have been to a wrong holloa which we went to, being quite sure our fox had slipped us." "I have been watching the fox slip away," I replied, "but it was 'the way' into the stomachs of Countess and some others; for when you slipped away after the crow-keeper, your hounds killed their fox." "Nonsense," said Mr. Wilkins, "you're cutting it too fat." "Get down from your horse," I said, "if you don't believe me;" and pointing to several of the hounds who were bloody, I bade him at least make use of *his nose* and smell *their* *heads.* One of the men did so, and said, "It's a fox, sure enough." So nettled at even a doubt, though in joke, being cast on any information of mine, I insisted good-humouredly that he would let one of his men go with me for the head and brush; he did so, which placed the matter in its right light.

There is another position I have ever taken, as firmly as the one that a hound takes his character from his huntsman, and it is this: If a huntsman begins to fight with his hounds, let them be ever so steady, they will fight with him, and by his unsteadiness they will become unsettled. If you pull at a horse, he will pull at you, on the same principle. Before I had my hounds in Bedfordshire three years, Bob Oldaker, who then hunted the Salisbury or Hartfield hounds, came over to my kennel for a mount. I put him on Jack-o'-Lantern, who was then too old to carry me any longer, and we met at Cowper's Oak. It was quite at the close of the season, and Yardley Chase had been used up, and we were a long time finding a fox. We found at last, and had a very quick thing. I overheard Bob Oldaker say to one of the gentlemen who was out, so it was no idle compliment, "that he had seen my hounds draw all day long in those wide woodlands, among hares just enough to tempt a riot, and had not heard a hound speak till the fox was found." Pretty well that, for their steadiness under me. The following occurrence, three years afterwards, took place with these hounds in the Pytchley country. We had been drawing small spinnies and little gorses, on the plan of "Old fellow, don't take us to a big wood," all day blank, and, at last, in a spinny full of hares some of the young hounds, grown impatient, had a lark, and amused themselves with riot. Jack sat near the cover with Mr. Wilkins, and the whippers-in went to the cover to quell the mutiny; but the saddle being easier than thorns, they did not dismount; and the spinny being too small for a ride, of course they did not get at the mischief-makers. The riot continued, and some of the ears of the entered hounds began to cock at the continued cry, and like the wild beasts that Van Amburgh's rival used to exhibit in a cage at the theatres, as it only needed a stumble with his hoop to make the lions and leopards rise from their quietude and tear him to pieces, so it only required a little angry noise from Jack to breed a further quarrel. Jack at last began to rate the rioters in cover from among the steady lot around him, and even to crack his whip, by the swing of the lash of which one or two hounds at his heels got hit, and they cried out. At this moment, Jack's master lost his temper, and sticking the spurs into his horse he bolted to aid the whippers-in. He should, with that laudable intent, have left the pack quietly instead of bolting off; the consequence of this example was, that some of the more impatient spirits whom I had seen cock their ears, bolted off with him and joined the riot. To crown the whole affair, Jack Stephens bolted off too with all the hounds with him, and got into the plantation, cutting at every hound he could see. Such a riot I never saw in my life! Having long before observed considerable jealousy towards me, and a wish among some of his field to prevent Mr. Wilkins from taking my advice, I made it a rule not to interfere; but on this occasion, seeing that the poor hounds who were not hunting hare had no place to go to, and that if they neared their huntsman they were cut over, I simply rode near the cover and stood still. In a moment a lot of hounds, not having any huntsman to go to, came out and sat round my horse's legs, where I was most happy that they should sit till the insane men who were wronging them were tired, and had come to their right understanding. My anger may be more easily guessed than described, when Mr. Wilkins and a whipper-in came flying round the corner; and the word was, "Damn 'em, pitch into 'em all!" I believe they were nettled still with a petty jealousy, that the hounds had sought me out for safety. I told them they were all mad together, and I wished to go away, not to see it; but had I gone I should have had to put up half the pack at my lodgings, for every bush had a hound in it peeping out to see whom they could with safety follow. After what I have narrated, I think I am justified in saying that the experience I had of him did



"Such a riot I never saw in my life."

G. H. Jalland.

Facing p. 142.

not raise Stephens much in my opinion as a huntsman. I saw no man, in fact, while Mr. Wilkins had the hounds, that I should have retained in my service a day, unless they had strangely altered their conduct in the field with hounds as well as elsewhere, except young Ball, whom they had from me. He was first a helper in my stable, and knowing old Tom Ball, who whipped-in for Lord Tavistock, before I took the country, I put him up occasionally as second whipper-in. He was a fine horseman, and had he remained with me I should have had no hesitation in promoting him, as I approved highly of what I saw. He was with Mr. Wilkins, under Jack Stephens, for some time, and then left for other service, and I lost sight of him.

In these Reminiscences I am averse to touching on anything unless it has to do with sport; if sport be mixed up with other passages of life, then I feel no compunction; besides, that which I am about to narrate, I hope will be taken as an example by others, if their lots cast them in a like situation. On our return from hunting to the inn at Brixworth, where, when the hounds were in the open, I put up, of course, the conversation after dinner was on the events of the day, as is natural. On these occasions, after dinner, Mr. Wilkins became very opinionative about his hounds, and, if contradicted or differed from by me, he always offered to back his opinion by a bet. Thus, when a brilliant hit had been made, he used to say which hound had made it, and was often wrong. I used to set him right as to the name of the particular hound, every one of them being as well known to me as the hair on my head; but my friend would not have it, and if I declined to bet he asserted it was because I was afraid to lose my money. I did not much mind what he or any one else said *after dinner*, but hoping to read him a lesson, I at last agreed to the wagers he offered, bidding him book the bets himself, and we would each attach our signatures. He always appointed his own judge as to the hound that made the hit, and the judge was Jack Stephens. I took care to have the thing fairly put, and the judgment on every occasion was in my favour. "Lug out, old boy," I used to say, after the fact had been settled next morning, my demand in the long-run being a very heavy one. "D—n it! you're in a deuce of a hurry for the money, Master Berkeley; I can't give it you just now," was the somewhat testy reply; and then, having pretended with much seriousness that I wanted the money, I used to take the written bet P. P., and tearing it, put it into the fire before his face. The bet was a certainty, but made under such circumstances, though carefully written out and signed by him, in my opinion no gentleman would have been justified in taking the money; yet there are many who would have been very angry if any one had said they were not gentlemen, who would have exacted every sixpence! The scenes which I have described soon became very irksome to me, and I resolved to hunt with the Pytchley no more; I therefore retired to Harrold Hall, parting very good friends with Mr. Wilkins, and contented myself with such hunting as I could get in the vicinity of my home.

# CHAPTER IX

"Now was the game destroyed, and not a hare
Escaped at least the danger of the snare;
Woods of their feather'd beauty were bereft,
The beauteous victims of the silent theft:
The well-known shops received a large supply,
That they who could not kill at least might buy."—Crabbe.

There are sporting trophies hanging up now in my dressing-room to which I will allude, as some of the circumstances under which they were won are curious. In the seven years I was at Harrold I had got up a great deal of game, and of course the game I reared spread to other woods, to the Harrold Woods, over which Mr. Magenis shot, and elsewhere. The Harrold Woods were the property of Lord de Grey. There is no country, *wherever there is land unpreserved*, that has not its quota of poachers or thieves of game; and as there were several tracts of land both belonging to Lord de Grey and to Mr. Alston, to which every night-shooter was free, of course there were plenty of poachers in the vicinity of Harrold Hall. It is not the well-preserved head of game that makes the poacher, or the idle and bad character; but it is an unprotected district of land, whereon there is a natural or indigenous head of game, to which any one is free who likes to take it. Young men thus obtain the means of pleasurably earning a few shillings to spend in drink and debauchery; and when they have imbibed a taste for it, and the little unprotected game is nearly exterminated, then they follow up their propensity on sites where it is more plentiful. The game-stealers of whom I am about to speak were reared, as far as their illegal avocation went, on the unprotected lands of Lord de Grey and Mr. Alston. Some time after I came to Harrold the Rev. Mr. Magenis, who then lived at Sharnbrook, had the shooting under Lord de Grey of the Harrold Woods, and put on a man named Coles, who was called a gamekeeper. Coles was not a gamekeeper, because he was hardly ever sober, and consequently much neglected his business. The Harrold Woods were only separated from the Odell Woods, attached to Harrold Hall, by a high road; so that my preserve might be said to join the woods over which Coles was supposed to attend to the interests of the game.

One morning in winter my keeper, William Savage, came to me with a face of consternation, stating that the gang of poachers for whom we had been on the look-out had paid Mr. Magenis's woods a visit, and had shot his keeper, Coles. Directly I heard of it I despatched a letter to Mr. Magenis to say, that if myself or any of my men could aid him in searching for the offenders, we were all at his service. On this we communicated further. Coles, with one of his arms shattered to pieces, was sent to the infirmary at Bedford; and his life being in imminent danger, his deposition under the circumstances was carefully taken. Now, in all cases of murder any observant person must have seen that there is invariably the finger of heaven, I know not how I can more aptly describe it, pointed in the right direction. Some circumstance in no wise resulting from any evidence of man, hangs on the guilty skirts, dogs the murderer's heels, and tends to put the avenger of blood on a scent which ends in retributive justice. I had often held conversation with the wounded man as to the poachers, and we both of us suspected that they came from Bozeat. My astonishment was great, therefore, when Coles repudiated the idea that he had been shot by those men; his words were, "No, they were not Bozeat men; I'm sure they came from Carleton," a village close to Harrold Hall. I then asked *why* he suspected the Carleton men, and if he thought he had ever seen the men before, or, in short, what put the belief into his head. The reply to this which was sent me was, "that Coles could not tell; he could not account for it, yet something completely possessed him with the idea that the man who shot him, and the others who were with him" (I think there were three or four), "all came from Carleton." Soon after he made this death-bed declaration the poor fellow died. At the time that this took place there were no county policemen; the parish constable was usually the oldest and most inefficient man that could be found, and, aware of that fact, I advised my being sworn in as special constable, and any warrant for the apprehension of the murderer to be committed to my care. I was in the midst of making a searching inquiry when word reached me from Mr. Magenis, that one of the gang was prepared to turn king's evidence, and that he had in fact given him information as to who it was that shot the keeper, and where he was at that moment at work, naming a lonely barn in the fields not far from Carleton. I knew the barn alluded to: none of my men were at home; so, there being no time to lose, Mr. Magenis and myself repaired at once to the spot. We tied up our horses, and I begged Mr. Magenis to keep a look-out round the premises, in case the man should attempt to run away, while I entered the barn and outhouses in search of him. The barn was the first scene of investigation; there lay his jacket and the newly threshed corn, so I was sure I was close upon him. In another instant I heard Mr. Magenis's voice, and on joining him I found him with the man in custody; it was then agreed between us, that he should ride off to another barn, where there was one of the gang supposed to be at work, and keep a watch over it while I conveyed the prisoner to Harrold Hall. I then produced a cord from my pocket and tied the prisoner's elbows together, and proceeded along the high road, having to pass through the village of Carleton. The man appeared very reluctant to walk and very sulky, and asked me "What I took him for?" I replied on a charge of murder, telling him at the same time he might say as little or as much as he pleased about it; but that, whatever he said would be noted down by me, and perhaps used against him. He volunteered one or two sentences, which showed me at once that he knew all about the transaction on the night on which the keeper was shot, and then relapsed into such a snail's pace that I had to inform him he *must* step out. On reaching Carleton I saw a head peep forth of the blacksmith's shop, and had I had any one into whose charge I could have delivered the prisoner, the fact of my being able to capture the ringleader would then and there have depended on who was the faster runner; for, on seeing me with the man in custody, the ringleader, as it was afterwards proved, was reported involuntarily to have exclaimed, "Here comes Mr. Berkeley with one on 'em in custody!" and rushing out into the back of the premises, he cleared a wall, and broke away across the fields. I saw him, but had no means of pursuit with the man then on my hands. We passed through the village, and between Carleton and the bridge to Harrold there are two or three little fields. In the midst of them we met three men, evidently associates of the prisoner, for I observed how quickly he saw them, and the effect it had on him long before they met us. He paused and complained that the cord hurt his arms, and said "he supposed I did not wish to put him to unnecessary pain." I was perfectly awake to his momentary idea of escape; but, on looking to his arms, I was still more alive to the thoughts he entertained, by discovering that the cord had been loosened by him, so that, though it still hampered, it did not entirely impede, the use of his arms. On seeing this I drew from my pocket a lance-wood truncheon, such as the London police use, held him still tighter by the collar, and told him that the cord did not hurt him, that I would kill him if he offered to escape, and that I would trouble him to stop while I re-bound his elbows. I put my knee to his back and drew in his elbows, while he seemed to hesitate what course he should pursue. He was bound safely by the time his friends came up, and, though he nodded to them, they did not seem inclined to show me they knew anything about him. I took him safely to Harrold Hall, and left him in the servants' apartment, under the custody of my gamekeeper, while I repaired in the direction of the barn whither Mr. Magenis had proceeded; but word reached me that the bird then had flown. While my keeper and the prisoner sat by the fire the keeper suddenly seized the leg of the murderer, and looking at his shoe exclaimed, "Ha! why these are not the shoes I tracked in the ride when Coles was shot." "No," replied the man; "I had on my others."

It had come to my ears that a person, driving the double trade of a tinker and public-house keeper at Carleton, was implicated, and I had searched his house; there were pheasants' feathers in the loft, but nothing else that I could discover: the man himself, they said, was away on business. On the afternoon on which the death of Coles was reported to me I thought I would search that house again; when I rode up to the door it was nearly dark. On opening the door signs of a general "flit" were evident. Cupboards were open and empty, things were packed, and no one to be seen. On proceeding into a low back kitchen, there sat four men, none of whom in that dim light I recognised. They had been drinking and smoking. The instant I entered one of them rose and left the house, and his person, as he walked out, was familiar to me; having peered under the slouched hats and into the faces of the other three,—they were strangers, and anything but of prepossessing appearance,—I asked them what they were doing there? They replied, "Keeping possession for the landlord." "What!" I said, "is he off?" "Gone," they replied, "on business." There were several things packed for removal in that apartment, when, to my great delight, I saw in the chimney corner two diminutive single-barrel guns, of the use of which I had long been aware. They were made up by the landlord and tinker for night shooting in the Harrold Woods, so small that, in a wind and in the midst of the roar of the woods in a rough night, their report could not be heard at a hundred yards' distance, and, when on such nights the pheasants roosted low, the seven or eight shot they carried did not destroy them for sale. I have these guns still in my possession. The instant I saw these much-wished-for engines, which, to the best of my belief, were two of those that were out when Coles was shot, though he was shot by a larger one, I stepped quickly up and took them under my arm. Up sprang the three fellows, with a demand that I should leave the guns alone, and where was my right or warrant to seize them? No time to lose, *that* I saw; so, springing back to the little low and narrow entrance or passage from the room, and drawing my truncheon, I told them "that was the warrant, and I would split the head of any man who assailed me." They all three came on, but I drew back so that only one could come in at me at a time, which no one of them seemed inclined to be the first to do, and, during their hesitation, three strides backwards took me into the bar and to the door, where, to my horror, I found my horse in custody of the fourth man whom I had seen go out. It was as near a thing as could be that I did not strike him, but he whispered, "Mount, sir;" and I saw the rein thrown on Norna's neck in readiness, and that his hand held the stirrup. I mounted just as the three fellows from within came out in my wake swearing at me; so, telling them I cared nothing for their menaces, I walked my horse slowly away, guns and all. The tinker and public-house keeper "flitted," and I heard of him no more. There was evidence to prove that he had been the receiver of stolen game, and I believe he had been more or less connected with the transactions of the night on which the keeper was murdered. That he himself was a poacher I know, from having met him on Lord De Grey's land, over which I had leave to sport, after dark, in pursuit of wild-fowl by the river, telling him then that I had a great mind to take his gun away, but, as that was before I ascertained him to be a confirmed game-stealer, on his entreating to be forgiven I let it pass. The end of this affair was remarkable. When the time of the assize came for the murderer to be tried he was seized with the small-pox, and the trial was, in consequence, postponed. His sentence ultimately was transportation, a verdict arrived at on account of the intentional insufficiency of the evidence, as, when I left it, a clearer case of the most deliberate murder could not be. The dying man's declaration proved that the leader of the party had a stick, and gave the word to fire. He was the man that ran away from the blacksmith's shop when he saw me. Coles had what was called a helper, or night-watcher, out with him, who ran away the moment it was found that poachers were in the wood, and Coles advanced on the poachers, who came out of the copsewood and collected in the ride, alone. They threatened to shoot him if he continued to advance or follow them, and the murderer twice raised his gun, but Coles on his death-bed said that each time, by the light of the moon, he could see, or at least he thought he saw, the man did not intend to fire. The third time Coles felt so convinced that he would fire, that he had time to guard his heart with his arm, and in his arm he received the whole charge, or he would have been shot dead. Now in this there seemed a providential interference, that the man should be preserved sufficiently to make a deposition and to afford a clue to the murderer; and the result proved that Coles' inexplicable belief was right, "that the gang consisted of Carleton men," and not of the long-suspected labourers from Bozeat. Though transportation seems a slight punishment in the eyes of men, when life has been illegally taken, probably death would have been preferred by the miserable culprit; he ought, however, to have been left for execution, if not because he shot that man, still by way of precaution to others, for the prevention of crime is the true object of all criminal legislation. That he was grievously punished in prison, and that he was a melancholy and severe lesson to all other culprits, there can be no doubt, for, before his illness, he used to alarm the gaol at night with his cries of terror. When approached by the aroused gaolers they found him pale as a ghost, his hair on end, and staring wildly round him; and, in reply to the question of "What ailed him?" he asserted that the murdered gamekeeper appeared to him, and, coming close to his ear, cried murder in it, and, sleeping or waking in the dark, he was thus for ever visited.

After I had preserved game for some time at Harrold, the "exclusive right" to all sport being rented by me, two of the tenants by the large woods set up a claim to kill the rabbits. I warned them that they must not do it, in vain; for I still found the wadding of their guns by the sides of the woods, and heard their guns when I was otherwise engaged. My keeper stood six feet one or two, and I ordered him, if they did not desist when told to do so, to stop it by force, and to take their guns away. As to the son of one of these tenants, my keeper seemed to hesitate whether he could take his gun from him, he being a stout, well-built young man, in the prime of life, nearly six feet high, and about thirteen stone. On the keeper's hesitation I told him I was much displeased. It was his duty to take Goliath's gun from him if he came, and I would have it done or he should not long be a servant of mine. One beautiful afternoon, when the rabbits were out at feed, shaking their ears at the flies, my keeper and myself were on the watch. We heard a gun, and disputed as to the direction in which it was. I was sure I was right by the flight of a wood-pigeon, but, as Savage persisted he was correct, I sent him to follow the course he intimated, while I went the other way. I firmly believe Savage intended, in this instance, to have led away from any encounter, for he looked blank when he received my orders, and saw that I was resolved to follow my own opinion. As I expected, I soon came in sight of the big young man, who had reloaded and was going on creeping after the rabbits. Savage having told me that this young fellow was looked on as a sort of cock-of-the-walk, I provided, as I recommend all young men to do in similar situations, against emergencies, and I took off my neckcloth and put it in my pocket. It is disagreeable to get the hard knuckles of a strong arm inside the neckcloth, the back of the assailant's hand pressing on the jugular; and I would on no account advise my friendly readers to risk a trial of it. Having thus cleared for action, I went up to the trespasser in pursuit of rabbits, though he stood on his father's farm, and requested him to desist. He refused to do so, when I fairly told him if he persisted in that refusal I should prevent the trespass the best way I could. Refusing still, he commenced searching for rabbits; so I closed with him and took away his gun. I then summoned him for the trespass, for which he was convicted, the magistrate directing that his gun should be restored, and telling me that, though I had a right, if he refused to desist, to apprehend him and convey him before the nearest justice of peace, I had no right to seize his gun. Now, if the magistrate is correct in his definition of the law, what a ridiculous law it is! A man has a right to protect his rabbits, and is told he is to take an offender, twenty-six years of age, thirteen stone, and six feet high, and bring him instantly before a magistrate whose residence is three or four miles off. Suppose the owner of the rabbits is able personally to encounter and capture the offender. He may sit on his prostrated body, and, as my friend Lord Arundell suggested, he might pull from his pocket the *Morning Herald* or the *Times*, and peruse the paper till the fallen combatant was tired of being sat on, but, if the worsted hero has no intention to walk, and, moreover, if pulled along by the heels, has an inconvenient way of clutching at the legs of his conveyor, or on to the stiles and gate-posts which occur on the road, I will defy any man in the course of four-and-twenty hours to produce such a load of sinew and objection at the place of justice intended by the law. By taking the gun I protected my property, and I maintain I was fully justified in doing so *at the time*, whatever I might have been in regard to the future. In fact, I could not take the man without first mastering his weapon. I restored the gun, and, shortly after, I met the other young farmer on his father's farm with a couple of rabbits in his man's hand. I met them just in time, or they would have been out into a green lane; they were going off, so my order to that effect was forestalled. I therefore contented myself with the forcible seizure of the rabbits. This man was also summoned by me, and convicted. The only part of his case which is unalterably stamped on my remembrance is, that at the end of the proceedings, held at Sharnbrook, he charged the presiding magistrate, as constable, half-a-crown for the trouble he had in serving the summons on himself, and the magistrate, not having a wholesome remembrance of Justice Midas before his eyes, *ordered him to receive the money!*

One day in the early part of the winter I was in Odell Dungey Wood looking after the game, when I saw three men stooping among the "young spring," that is, the first shoot of the copsewood after it has been cut. We had had snares set in this wood by the road-side, and had captured an offender, and I made no doubt these men were at the same game. They seemed to be busily searching the runs, and were coming directly towards me: so with my deer-dog and retriever Shark, the son of Smoker, I lay down behind an old pollard stump. On they came; and intent as they were, their eyes on the ground, the middle man of the three almost stepped upon me. Up I jumped, my gun in the left hand, and with the right I knocked him down, and then ran at the other two. Off they set, different ways, one for the road and one for the field between Dungey and Forty Acres. I pursued the latter, taking care not to fall over the stumps, while he, running wild, and in taking a flyer at the wattled hedge out of the cover, caught his toe in the top binder, and went headlong into the field. Up he got, though worsted by the fall, and continued his flight. I did not want to be put out of breath with three men about me; so I called to him, "that it should be the worse for him if he did not stop." Down he fell on his knees, and began to pray for pardon. Having contented myself with searching his pockets, in which I found nothing, I ordered him off, in haste to return and see that the man I had left on the ground, or the other who had set off to run away, did not take up anything that might be there. When I got back to the wood the fallen man had picked himself up and was nowhere to be seen, and I had the wood to myself. On searching the ground I discovered that they were stealing acorns, for they had left behind them three sacks, each half full. Those woods being a long way from home, I always went to them for the day, and carried a small pocket-flask containing a glass of sherry, and also a sandwich. Having sat on one of the sacks, those viands were produced, when, just as I had drained my flask, the turn-up of my head gave me to see my three friends gathered together, each having armed himself with a stick, and seated on the top bar of a gate by the road-side gazing at me. I did not like it; for though it is easy enough to attack and disperse great odds by aid of a sudden onset, when those assaulted don't know how many backers the assaulter may have behind him, yet when men have time to reason with themselves, and see that they are as three to one, it alters the probability of victory very much. I confess, I thought myself in for a fight at least, and I would have given much for the presence of another man. However, the best course was to put a bold face on the matter; men don't like to attack another when he is armed with a gun, and has at his heels a large and faithful dog. So I emptied the sacks of their acorns, casting them widely about, and, putting the two sacks into one, I buckled them round my waist by aid of my shot-belt. This left my arms free for war, and I carelessly strode out of the cover. About half a mile from where I was I knew that my keeper and his assistant were ferreting rabbits; so as soon as I got well out of view I took to my heels, and ran to where they were, returning with them with as little delay as possible. I came back up the cover, in a line with the road, and got to within forty yards of the gate, on which the three men still sat, without their being aware of it. Just as I got within hearing one man jumped down from the gate into the road, saying, angrily, "Well, if you are all afraid to go in, come along home, for I'll stay here no longer." He seemed to have been trying to persuade them to go into the wood again; so, making a sign to my men to lie still, I rose and discovered myself, apparently alone, bidding them "to be off, and not to let me catch them there again!" Though I seemed to be alone, it had no effect by way of enticement to battle, and they all went grumbling away.

I left Harrold Hall with a heavy heart; for though I had met with anything but fair treatment at the hands of what was called the Oakley Club, during the first two years of my hunting that country, still I looked on it then as I look on it now,—the happiest period of my huntsman's life; and I went, not only from many people of all classes whom I liked, but from a place of which I had grown fond by association. And one word for poor dear old Mrs. Church of the Manor Farm, at Stevington. Though I had preserved game on her lands strictly, we never had the shadow of a disagreement: and I can picture to myself now her yellow stubbles on the first of September, full of partridge; her fresh green meads by the river-side, and her sweet-breathed cows; the old picturesque ruin of the nunnery, close to her house, and looking on to the river, and the cool, sparkling, bubbling spring that issued beneath it, never frozen in winter nor dry in summer, its cresses ever green when all around was parched and dry, steadfast in surrounding verdure as Catholic to the olden faith,—that faith unchanged amidst the change of years.

About two in the day my kind old friend expected me to look in for luncheon; my dogs to the bubbling spring, and then myself to her cool stone parlour and the hospitable table, spread with a good brown loaf and the freshest butter, an ample cheese, perhaps some cold meat, and then a cold homely-made plum pudding such as your cook *won't* give you at home, but once tasted becomes a viand to swear by for ever after. Poor Mrs. Church grew blind, and died, after the operation of couching, before I left Harrold Hall. Then the cool sojourn by the river-side in fishing for bream, and the delight I derived when, stretched on my lawn in summer, or from the drawing-room window, I beheld my stud of goodly hunters, eighteen or twenty in number, wading up to their shoulders on a hot afternoon into the swift-running stream at the foot of the garden to cool their legs, get rid of the flies, and crop the juicy green weeds that waved above the shallows. There is many a scene from Harrold deeply impressed on my recollection, and many a well-remembered face still living I should joy in seeing again. Though I was there but seven years, it seems as if in that period I had lived the greater portion of my sportsman's life, and taken leave of pleasures never more to return. It was there I took a step, a public one, dictated by brotherly affection, which has since been miserably requited by him whom it so amply served, though acknowledged by the gratitude of a county. The splendid piece of plate presented to me by my friends on my retirement from a twenty years' representation in Parliament, so handsomely bestowed and so aptly chosen—a stag pulled down by three Highland greyhounds, and weighing, in silver, six hundred ounces—is no mean proof that while I served a brother I was equally mindful of my public duty. My sideboard also owns a gift from the farmers of Bedfordshire, over whose lands I hunted, presented to me at a dinner at the Swan Inn, at Bedford—a silver hunting-horn, containing the inscription, on a pedestal, surrounded by four foxhounds, with the "B" graven on their sides, seated in couples; executed by Garrard in the Haymarket. The piece of plate presented by the county is by Hunt and Roskell. These are things for a representative as well as a sportsman to look on, and feel that, let the wind blow ever so cold, there is yet warmth in the world; and though ingratitude, deep and undeserved, may arise when it has a right to be the least expected, there are yet hearts full of love and approbation to cheer the growth of the grey hair.

# CHAPTER X

"Where in the shallow stream the roaches play,  
And stony fragments stay the winding stream,  
And gilded pebbles at the bottom gleam,  
Giving their yellow surface to the sun,  
And making proud the waters as they run."—CRABBE.

HAVING taken Teffont manor-house, near Salisbury, in Wiltshire, and reared at Harrold a great many partridges and pheasants by hand, I had wicker baskets made for them, low, and imperial-like, to fit the top of a post-chaise; and after feeding-time one night, I sent my butler with them post to Teffont, at which place he arrived by break of day the following morning. Coops being in readiness, hens, with their broods, were put out on the lawn, with scarce the loss of a bird. I had appointed a keeper, whom I had in my service at Harrold, as under-man, to look after the game until such time as I came to reside. His strict orders were, to preserve Mr. Wyndham's foxes, and to shoot at nothing but the common vermin. How he obeyed these orders remains to be seen. Soon after the arrival of the young game, a fox paid the coops a visit, and at once killed thirty pheasants, besides partridges, the greater portion of which he buried about the flower-beds. On finding that foxes neighboured me so close, I borrowed an idea from a keeper at Berkeley Castle, and lit a lantern or two, suspending them by a string, so that they swung with any airs that might stir in the night; and this is, short of a direct fence with hurdles, the only effective remedy against the visit of the fox. On taking up my residence at Teffont I found that my extraordinary landlord had stolen all his own trout from the little lake on the lawn since I had paid the place a visit and agreed to become the tenant, and had abstracted from every room in the house more or less furniture. Not having in the first instance received an inventory, it was difficult for me to name each article that he had taken, and yet I could take on myself to swear to a considerable abstraction. My observation having been backed by the report of my keeper, that he had seen several articles of furniture removed, and that my landlord had been busy about the lake, I charged him with the fact as to the furniture, and insisted on the things he had taken away being restored. The fish could not be replaced; but a considerable quantity of the furniture was put back again. Teffont manor-house was the best "humbug" I ever saw: its appearance outside, with its lawn and flower-garden and little lake, overgrown as the house was, with ivy, roses, and jessamine, up to the very chimney-tops, was very pretty; but everything had been sacrificed to external appearance. There was only one bed-room that was comfortable; the dining-room opened into the conservatory; and the drawing-room was so situated that you had to stand on a chair to look out of the window. The dining-room ought to have been the drawing-room, but it could not be made into one, on account of the situation of the kitchen. It was a curious house: my study or morning-room was on the lawn, the window opening to the ground; I had to ascend a considerable staircase to the dining-room, though that also opened on the lawn; there was then a tower, up which you went by a very steep ascent of stone steps, and when at the top of the tower you stepped out upon the ground again. The fact was, the house was let into the side of a hill, and you stepped from the roof itself beneath the trees of a fir plantation. The few trout left in the lake, from their scarcity, thrived in the beautiful water rising but a mile away in the chalk of the downs, till they were as red and good as little salmon; and as they sailed, in warm weather, beneath the shade of the trees, I could always ensure a good fish for dinner baiting with a worm. The water was so clear that while at Teffont I made myself master of the nature and habits of the trout, and discovered that every large trout keeps a space of the water as a beat for himself, and when intruded on by another fish immediately attacks, and drives him off. When the water-meadows were reflooded after the removal of sheep, and the trout from the river ascended the narrow ditches to feed on the small red worm collected by the presence of the flock, I used to tickle them, as it is called, and having captured them they were put into the lake. This I rather over-did; for I so filled the lake that the condition of the trout became impaired, though the angling was all the better. In addition to the tricks played by my landlord as to furniture and other things, I found to my cost he had leased to me a portion of the river to which he had not the slightest right. No one was good enough to explain this to me at the first onset, and every one for a time abstained from fishing in the river, and, by so doing, favoured the error into which my landlord had led me: however, one day my keeper, John Savage, came running breathless into my room, to say that a number of men were dragging the river with a net. I asked him why he did not seize the net; and he replied, "They were so many." Having told him that hostile numbers, where a man was in the right, went for nothing, I hastened to the river, followed by him, my butler Cratchley, who had succeeded my old servant Eary, then dead, and two labourers named George Target and James Dewy, who afterwards became the best gamekeepers I ever knew. As I came in sight of the river there was evidently a misgiving in the minds of some of the party as to the maintenance of peace, or their success in war, for I saw several point-nets ascend the bank from the water, and fly into the opposite woods of Mr. Penruddocke. When we reached the bank there might be about five or six men left still in possession of the drag-net. I jumped into the river, followed by my three men; the butler evidently thinking that water was not his place (had it been wine it might have been different), remained on the bank. A great stout carrier was the first man I got hold of; and finding that he kept the rope twisted round his hands, I gave the word to my men to out knives, and cut away. It was well obeyed, and in two minutes the net and ropes, piecemeal, were in our possession, and I turned those I deemed the aggressors out of the river. The real fact of the case stood thus: I had nothing whatever to do with that portion of the river, for my landlord had no power over it, and had no sort of right to let it. In proof of this, the farmer, Mr. Futcher, who had the mill to which that portion of the river was exclusively attached, summoned me before the Bench for the assault and damage to the net, at the same time good-humouredly referring me for information to deeds respecting the right of fishery, and saying that he had no desire to proceed to extremities, if I would convince myself that he was right and I was wrong. I did so, and assured him of my regret at having been so shamefully misled by my landlord; and, much to my good friend the late Mr. Wyndham of Dinton's amusement, as well as mine, I discovered that the net I had destroyed was his, lent to the farmer on that occasion. Of course, I presented Mr. Wyndham with another net, and then the affair ended. This made me a little cautious as to how I claimed any more rights on my landlord's authority; and I refused to shoot on the best partridge ground, Place Farm, the property of my friend, Lord Arundell, till he put into my hands the authority on which he assumed to let that shooting to me. He had told me he had a written document giving him the exclusive shooting of that land; so he could not well escape from an attempt to produce it. On examination, it proved to be nothing more than a written permission from the late Lord Arundell to shoot upon the farm. As he had pretended to the noble lord then in possession that he had a right over this land, the moment I got possession of the document I sent it to Wardour Castle, begging Lord Arundell to put it in the fire, so to put an end to any further impudent as well as empty assumption. Lord Arundell afterwards gave me the right over this farm, which I used during the two years I remained at Teffont. A funny thing happened while I shot over and preserved this farm, which amused me very much. At the foot of it ran a little stream, from the great Fonthill Lake, the property of Mr. Morrison; the stream undoubtedly belonged to Lord Arundell, or at least half of it; so I exercised the right to fish. The bailiff of Mr. Morrison, though he never said anything to me (neither did his master), evidently disliked my fishing there; and I am told that the bailiff publicly asserted that Lord Arundell had not the right. One day, I was very busy in the water with the point-nets when it struck me I heard either the roar of an unfelt breeze, or else something like a small sea strayed from the ocean, and, wandering over the lands above me, it sounded presently still more like water; so I stepped on to the bank of the stream, to listen what was the matter. Down came the lake, in what we of the Severn should term "a bore," tearing up the gravel, and knocking about the banks like mad, while I stood laughing at it till it went by. It was a trick of the foolish bailiff, to drown me out; and knowing that he could not, for the sake of his own fish and stock of water, go on flooding, I sat down till it was over, and then, the water being made thick, and the eels to stir, I had, thanks to the bailiff, better sport than ever. Lord Arundell afterwards sold this farm to Mr. Morrison.

When I first came into Wiltshire I had a day or two with Mr. Codrington's hounds, in the Great Ridge, and other places. No man knew more of hunting than he did, or how he should and would have done it, had he been anything within a riding weight. People called him slow, and he could not, in his person, well be otherwise; but Mr. Codrington made his system suit his personal capability, for, if the hounds ran hard, he saw none of the fun. If he had men out with him to whom he wished to show a run, he used to say to the hounds, as they went into cover, "There, go and find your fox; and when you have found him, I hope I shan't see you again for two hours, and then you'll have had a good run, and killed him." I forget his first man's name who was with him then in Wiltshire; but I liked what I saw of him very much. We worked together one day in the Great Ridge, and no man was more pleased than Mr. Codrington.

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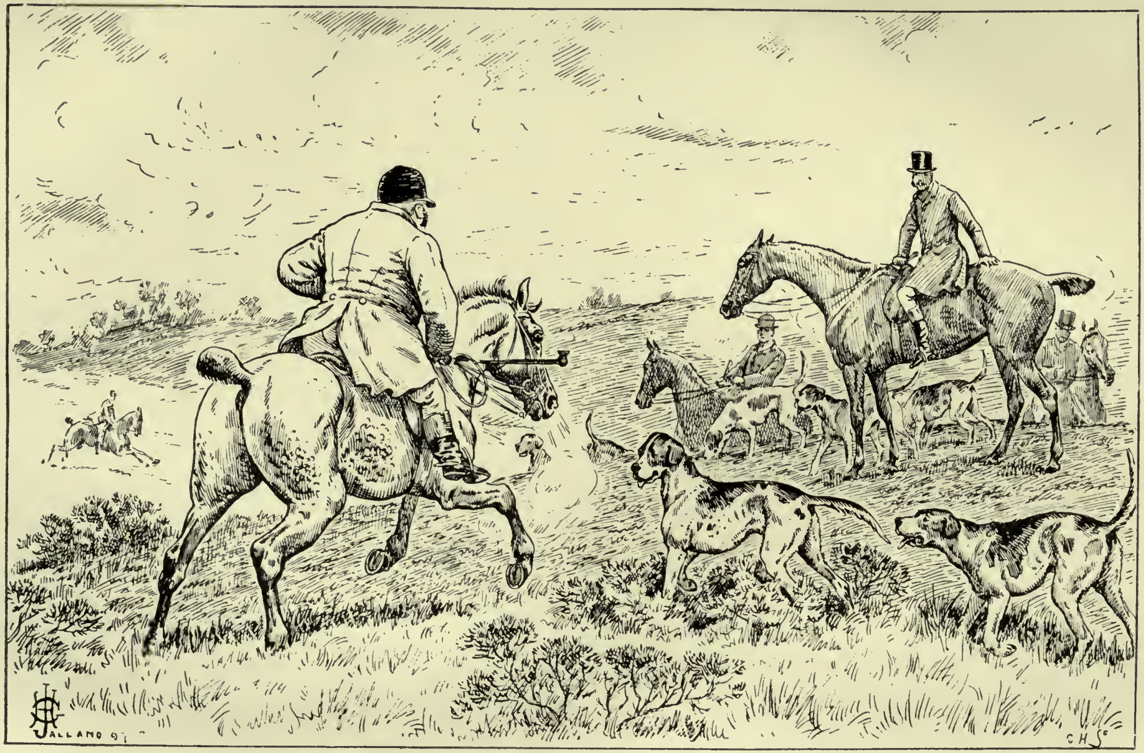
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"MATTER? OH LORD! IT'S NOTHING BUT A HARE."

Before I was used to Mr. Codrington's way of talking to himself, we ran a fox in the Great Ridge, and then suddenly went away over the down with *a scent.* The hounds ran hard for fifteen minutes, and then inexplicably threw up. They did not know me, and there was no one "to put 'em along," if I had known what to do; but so sudden was the check, with nothing that I could see to cause it, that, had they been my own hounds, I should scarcely have known what remedy to apply. I sat looking on, with some suspicion of riot, when, a long way off down the wind, I heard the most painful groans, mingled with deprecations, and my first idea was, that it came from a delirious and suffering fellow-creature, dragged, perhaps, in his stirrup. I could not see the person who seemed in such mortal agony for the undulations of the downs; but presently I heard the hollow sound of a horse's feet, and over the rise came Mr. Codrington, all right, but moaning dreadfully. I set off to meet him, anxiously inquiring, "What was the matter?" "Matter! oh Lord!" he said. "Come up, horse," and then, rolling in his saddle, he cried, "Matter! oh Lord! it's nothing but a hare." He called the hounds; I put 'em to him, and we returned to the woodland fox. I afterwards met Mr. Codrington at Wilverley, when he hunted the New Forest; and, observing that he was on a queer-looking animal for such a weight, I asked, "What that was he was on?" "Oh Lord!" he cried, "all I know is, it's not a hunter."

The oddest system I ever saw with hounds was Mr. William Wyndham's, and he occasionally broached opinions that I could not reconcile with anything I had learned by former experience. His plan seemed to me to be, to do nothing, and I have been told that he has said, that when a hound distinguished himself in the pack by making a wonderful hit, he always drafted him, it being wrong, in his opinion, that one hound should be able to distinguish himself from the others. I have not heard Mr. Wyndham say this; and if the rumour that he has said so be not founded on fact, I beg his pardon for repeating it. Still, I saw enough of his system to feel quite sure that his foxes had a jubilee, and that, unless there was such a scent as forced the hounds to come along, neither Mr. Wyndham's exertion nor that of his hounds would make a bad day a middling one, nor a middling day one that was amply satisfactory. The greatest compliment I ever had paid me, as to my huntsman's capabilities, was when riding men, as well as sportsmen (they are not always the same), said, "We like to come with you; for whatever the scent is, you always give us something to do." A huntsman may make a bad day a good one by doing as Tom Oldacre used to do, when there was no scent to serve his hounds; that is, guess the run of his fox so well, that he lifts his hounds from point to point till the weary fox comes back to him, and, instead of keeping so far before the hounds, fails in his pace so much, that the hounds get near enough to him to make a scent, wherewith to run and kill him. I call the man capable of doing this a huntsman. Foolish people say, "Never lift hounds." The real answer to this is, "Never lift them, unless they need it;" but if you are to have a good pack of hounds, willing and able to kill their foxes, I assert that they must occasionally be lifted, or the show on the kennel doors of foxes' scalps will be very few. To prove how little judgment in a hunting-field sometimes sits in a man's head, often have I heard hounds running to me as I sat at the end of a cover, and because a hare has bolted out of the meuse in the cover-hedge first, when the leading hound came crashing through immediately after the hare, fools have cracked their whips in the face of the pack, and cried, "'Ware hare!" To think that the men who did so had not reason enough to know that it was possible that the fox might have gone by before they stood there, is enraging, and that they should not be aware that a hare, being a timid animal, would naturally fly before the noise of the hounds, and most probably avail herself of the same hole in the hedge that gave egress to the fox, proves an amount of ignorance scarcely to be believed. Again, I have seen men crack their whips and cry, "'Ware heel!" when hounds have run the line of scent up a green lane and back again, the fox having been headed; in short, there is no conceivable error

I have not seen men, with whips in their hands and caps and hats on what looked like heads, commit, in my reminiscences of hunting.

Although I differed entirely from Mr. Wyndham's system of hunting, I resolved, so long as I was master of Teffont and the main earths in the stone quarries, he should have no lack of foxes; and I wished to get up a few rabbits to save the other game. In saying this, I beg the rising generation of sportsmen to remember, that having a large quantity of rabbits on a manor will not save the game nor feed the foxes, unless the rabbits are purposely killed, and left dead about the covers, for the foxes to pick up. If this is done, you may make the old dog and vixen of a litter feed as regularly as the poultry in your farm-yard, and divert them from the game. The thing that will do harm to the game is a single old dog-fox, who, *unmarried* and having no children to provide for, roams the country far and wide, and perhaps comes from a distance, where he has been either half-entrapped or half-poisoned by a dead bait. Such a fox as this will do harm, and dreading a bait will catch his own food; and a man fond of hunting must put up with it.

My eyes being always open to signs of the time, I saw shot-marks on the twigs in one or two meuses about Teffont; therefore I need hear neither voice nor gun nor dog to be sure that some one had shot at ground game, in direct disobedience of orders. Over the stone quarries, where the main earths were, was a sort of precipice, so steep that, for several hundred yards, there was but one place where you could get down to the table-land of the quarries. There were a good many rabbits about that vicinity; so I wished to kill some for the table. The first day I went there, when I began to creep along the edge of the cliff, I observed that Wolf, a deer-dog and retriever, and grandson of Smoker, never went with me beyond one spot, but always waited there till I had either shot a rabbit or passed on to other places; and as he never went from my heels without some very especial good cause, I investigated the matter, and found that he always stopped at the only place by which he could descend and pick up the rabbit. *Ergo*, as on the first day he did so with me I had never shot at a rabbit there, his experience must have arisen with some other gunner. Knowing, therefore, through Wolf, that my man had shot rabbits, I discharged him, on some additional proof.

In the winter I discovered that all the trout in the lake on the lawn ascended the stream which ran through the village above my house, to spawn; and that when they did so they became the prey of all the idle boys at the cottage doors. I put up a stop at the verge of my premises in the shape of an upright grating; but this, when any flush of rain came, impeded the stream so much that it flooded the village, and of course I was obliged to take it down. Having observed that a trout as well as a deer always got close under the impediment it wished to jump, I applied the same principle in a stop to the fish that I would have used in a fence to deer; and instead of putting a high perpendicular grating that caught all rubbish and blocked up the water, I had a grating made half the size, and slanted it from the bottom, so that the top of it should be a few inches only above the natural height of the stream. This answered perfectly: in winter, when the water was clear, I used to see the trout under it, and leaping up against it; but in no one instance did I ever know a fish to back and jump when the fence rose above the water. As the flood, when it came, swept right over this without blocking back the water, and as the fish, even in times of flood, always occupied themselves in trying to get up underneath it, instead of drawing back to the extreme verge, it being necessary to give the trout a portion of the shoal water to breed in, I put the fence some little way above my premises. My agreeable landlord, who was living in a small house he had built for himself in the village, in order to annoy me, sent word to say he should take the stop I had put up down; the reply to this was, that if I caught him at it I would fling him into the water. He did not pull it down; and I kept the lake full of trout during my residence there of two years. I had originally taken the place on a lease for five or seven years; but my landlord behaved so ill, and infracted the agreement to such an extent, that we went to law, and I quashed the undertaking at the expiration of the second year.

In any building which I undertook at Teffont, and there was no place fit to put a decently nurtured dog in when I came there, he bound himself to find stone and mortar on my paying for the labour. On the threat of flinging him into the water if he pulled down the stop put against the trout, he pretended anger, and sent to me to say he would supply my house with butter and cream from his farm no more, demanding instant payment for the week that was owing. I have not the slightest doubt that he thought that I should really be angry, and pay his bill in haste, without looking at it. I did look at it, though; and was astounded at the charge for a week's dairy. On looking closely into the items I discovered that, slipped in between the charges for cream and butter, was the amount of stone and mortar he had found as per agreement for the improvements I had made. This attempt at imposition was broadly obliterated by my pen, and my servant called, money in hand, in exchange for a receipt for the dairy-charge alone. Having quashed the original lease on my quitting the place at the end of the second year, my landlord sent me in a charge for undue wear and tear and dilapidation; and in the same bill, reader!—thou wilt never believe it—was a charge to the amount, I think, of "two pounds for the loss of his wife's peace of mind in that Mrs. Berkeley had deprived her of a pet canary-bird during the time of our residence at Teffont." The fact as to the bird was this:—we found it there on our arrival in a cage, hung up in the conservatory, forgotten, and nearly dead from famine; Mrs. Berkeley took great care of the poor little thing, and it recovered and became much attached. The bird undoubtedly did not originally belong to us; so I returned it with the following note:—

"Sir, I return you the canary-bird; but as to your charge for the loss of Mrs. ——'s peace of mind on this occasion, that is absurd: considering the time you have been married, she could not have had any to lose."

When, in the first instance, I came down to look at his place, not taking anything for granted, an application was made by me to see a net drawn in the river to ascertain if there were any trout in it. He sent his men with me, and I convinced myself that there were trout. In the accounts he tried to impose on me, I found the payment for the day of his men set down to my charge. So annoying was this man's conduct that I confess to the folly of having entertained the wish to give him what is vulgarly called "a bit of one's mind:" what that might have been followed up by, Heaven only knows. He lived in his cottage, to furnish which he had abstracted from the manor-house the furniture he had leased to me, and I knew by his tracks that at times he walked about my woods, and strongly suspected that he took his perambulations, in summer, when he heard my dinner-bell ring. I dined at three o'clock, and generally fished after dinner. To give him a meeting, the dinner-bell rung at the usual hour, but the act of dining was postponed till six; and instead of the bell's having proclaimed me safe, it rang only to deceive him. The ruse answered; and I saw him in my woods, but unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately, accompanied by his daughters. Their presence prevented any interference at my hands.

My keeper reported a litter of four cubs at the stone quarries; and the next day being a still and sunny one, the sort of weather during which young things like to bask, about three o'clock I crept softly to the cliff above and peeped over. One cub was at first only visible: he stretched and yawned as a boy might do who had only just pulled off his nightcap; so I guessed the others would soon be on the stir. A second little nose peeped out, and, the owner of it having been propelled forwards by some pressure from within, out he stumbled, and a third, and then a fourth, cub pitched upon him with a little leap at play. "The keeper is right," I said to myself; but ah, ha! there are more yet! a fifth, a sixth, a seventh, and at last *twelve cubs* lay huddled together in the sun, fair to be seen and fully in view. Two of them, Hunt and Roskell not then being known to me, appeared in my delighted eyes to have been made by Storr and Mortimer. I never saw such darlings! As is often seen in a litter of pigs, in this case there were two not much bigger than rats, and their coats of a dappled blue, cubs in miniature, but so weak that they staggered in their play. The whole litter were mean in condition, the old vixen not being able to make enough milk. Leaving them to solace in the sunbeam I stole away, and, having shot a rabbit, came back and dropped a portion of it among them. Oh, what commotion and yells it produced! with a shriek of terror they bolted one over the other into the earth. The wind set from the paunch of the rabbit direct into their home,—so I watched; and not a minute had elapsed before I descried a little picked nose winding up into the air: it scented the viands, and rushed to the feast. Cub after cub then came out, and there was as much outcry in fighting to obtain a portion of the rabbit as there was in the terror occasioned by its sudden fall. From that time these cubs were regularly fed, and, for all I know, they were every one reared to maturity. This was the largest litter I ever knew of, or heard mentioned. People who are ignorant of the nature of the fox might suppose it was a double litter, the offspring of two vixen foxes, but it was not so; but one brace of foxes attended them, and they were the sire and dam. In the whole course of my experience I never knew two vixens in their wild and thoroughly natural state lay up their cubs even near each other. A vixen, when she has a litter, keeps what may be called a walk to herself; and if, as I proved in Bedfordshire, an artificial litter of cubs is turned into a made earth or faggot pile too near her, the wild vixen will kill or worry them. A litter of foxes change their playgrounds, and people often mistake the using of one litter for that of two.

Having observed that Mr. Wyndham's hounds stood on too much ceremony with their foxes, and dreamed that I saw one of his hounds by accident meet a fox in cover, when the pack had been running twenty minutes, and bow to him and beg his pardon for being anywhere but behind him, I resolved secretly to aid the pack; as, not being their huntsman, I could not do so publicly. For this purpose I recalled to my recollection a plan I had adopted as a boy in regard to a rabbit. The rabbit was too fast for Grumbo, and at the time to which I allude I had no gun, so artifice was the only thing that could ensure a victory. Frighten a rabbit and he will run for his hole; in his haste he will not pause to ascertain *how far* that hole may be open, so I used to stop the hole, arm's-length in, and Grumbo or myself were sure to be at the entrance before the puzzled rabbit had satisfied himself that he could not go farther. The earths were in some of the immense chambers of the quarry, running for hundreds of yards under the hill; so to be able to stop the foxes from entering, we had to build a wall with the loose stones, leaving only an aperture for the fox to go in and out. I built a second wall still farther in, and on a hunting day I left the usual stop open, so that the fox, as he thought, got safe, but in reality he only got far enough in to keep him quiet till the hounds came up. To this dodge the Dinton pack were indebted for a supply of blood.

Having always liked coursing from the time of my first greyhound, Fly, who ran so often that at last she would try a hare's speed for a hundred yards, and if she could not turn her she would stop and look for another, the moment I saw the magnificent Wiltshire Downs, I resolved on adding to my greyhounds. I was then elected a member of the Deptford Club, and never shall I forget the first meeting I attended. Not to be personal, nor to give any offence—I am sure that to give offence is not in the least my intention—I will imagine a meeting at the Pig and Whistle, anywhere in a Down country. The members of the club are expected; their servants with their greyhounds are already arrived; the greater part of these servants sit down to supper on hares they have poached with their master's greyhounds at the risk of laming them and making them run cunning,—a friend or two of the respective parties commissioned to keep sober, and, when all are overcome by liquor, or fast asleep, to give to the favourite running dogs, who are supposed to be likely to win, about four in the morning, a heavy "stopping ball," made after the suet dumplings often set down before little boys at school, to be eaten first by way of antidote to mutton. The little boys' appetite and the greyhounds' wind are alike choked by this indissoluble pill, if it can be administered. I advise, therefore, all coursers to have a lock-up place for their dogs, with no opening through which a dose of the slows can pass. The dinner hour approaches; every bedroom in the inn is taken, and the long room used for public balls is laid out with an extensive table for dinner; every soul is in right good humour, for every man is fond of his dog, and thinks him safe to win. The judge dines there; and it is curious to hear the civil and affectionate inquiries after his family made by every courser that has a dog in the stakes; and as to wine! there is not a man present who does not ask the judge to drink with him forty times over. Pens and ink come with the dessert; the ink in a wine-glass is precisely the colour of port; bets are made; books are produced, and the young chaps of the party inclined for fun, wait till some old courser offers to take the odds against his dog, and at once offer to bet even that he wins. The old courser's rage at their thus spoiling his market is the only symptom of ill-will that is on the *first day* permitted to appear. On the second day one-half of the company during dinner are sulky, and scarcely speak to the other half: these are the men whose dogs have been beaten. The judge's family by the offended half of the party are supposed to be in rude health, or are forgotten; they seem to deem that the judge is no longer dry, for the invitations to drink wine have fallen off in a corresponding degree. Bets are not made so freely as before; and men, who decline proffered wagers, mutter something about not "knowing what they are doing."

The third day arrives; the dinner party has considerably decreased, the judge appears with a black eye, is cut by all save three or four who are amazingly fond of him, and these are the winners of the stakes.

In speaking of coursing, I must relate a curious accident that happened to Mr. Goodlake, lamented by us all at the time, but which ultimately proved a public benefit. It chanced that the port wine and the ink put by the side of his plate after dinner, were, as I have said before, precisely of the same hue, and in the same sized wine-glass. Mr. Goodlake was laying down the law, as his great experience in matters of the leash entitles him to do, when, on wishing to wash down his last clause with a glass of port, he took up the wrong beaker and bolted the ink. Great was the spluttering, great the consternation among surrounding friends; but the ink was down and no blotting paper, even were an arm-chair or his dressing-gown to be lined with it, could absorb the black draught, and, at the risk of dreaming of a printer's devil, on his ink to bed Mr. Goodlake was obliged to go. Little did we think what an effect this accident would produce, and how fortunate for the elucidation of the mysteries of the leash. For a time, perhaps, the patient was restless, and showed a considerable degree of uneasiness in the presence of Johnson's Dictionary; but at last, after many throes, we were all delighted and enlightened by the ink coming out in two volumes, on Coursing, under Mr. Goodlake's hand!

In spite of the information contained in those erudite books, if I am to govern my opinion by the conduct of judges of the field, there is a considerable deal yet more to be learned in the decision on courses. Thus, when two greyhounds are running a match, the one being much faster than the other, and the fast one leading and *holding the hare in check*, it is not a "go-by," in the approved acceptation of that term, if the hindmost dog passes the other like a shot and turns the hare. For this reason—the greyhound that had been leading had the hare in check, neither going at the top of their speed, because the hare was gathered up to turn at the expected lunge of the leading dog, and the dog finding she was about to turn was also to a certain extent on its haunches expecting it, therefore these two being in that position, a sheep-dog, had he joined in the run, might have passed the leading greyhound and turned the hare. I have seen uncommonly bad judges under the above circumstances count this as a go-by and a turn, and use it so in their decision. The lookers-on often cry out at it as a go-by, but not being close to the dogs their ignorance may be pardoned. There is with the existing judges and juries a glorious uncertainty in coursing as in the law, equally encouraging to the proprietor of a bad cause or a bad greyhound; and I am quite sure that very many courses have been given to me to which I was in no way entitled, and an equal number assigned against me which I had decidedly won; and it is that fact that has ever rendered me of the opinion that a man need not have the best greyhound to come off the victor. During my experience I have seen queer things done. I saw a greyhound of Mr. William Lawrence's, at a meeting near Cheltenham, put in, I think, four times for undecided courses, each course of which Mr. Lawrence won, till by a deep fallow and an incompetent hare, a chance was afforded of deciding the course against him. An infinity of unjust sentences are passed during the season, and if one can do so, the charitable way of accounting for them is, the great ignorance in the rules of coursing in the judges.

Suppose two greyhounds are slipped at a bad hare, and one of them shows a vast superiority of speed over the other in the run up, and first two or three turns while the hare is on her speed and strong, then after that if the hare loses her speed and strength, and dodges the dogs round a bush, or in and out a bundle of hurdles leaned against a wall, as I once saw, and the other dog dodges the self-turned hare the most round and round a space not exceeding forty yards, all that, if it lasted for ten or twenty minutes, would not, and should not count over the decided superiority and work when the dogs were at the top of their speed, and obliged to turn the hare instead of the hare turning herself. There is no field where a dog more requires the presence of his master than in a coursing field, in order to see fair play. I saw a greyhound of mine at the Greenway Meeting, in slips with a dog of Sir J. Bosworth's, the attendant of whom was a queer Irish lad employed by the person to whom the dog was lent. Wide awake were the Irishmen, and so was I. My greyhound was a beautiful little timid thing, the best of her size that ever ran, a pet, belonging to a lady to whom I had presented her; and her competitor was Vrayefroy, or his brother, I forget which, an animal the size of a deer-dog, and as bold as a lion, who pulled in the slips as if harnessed to a huckster's cart. The timidity of my greyhound and the bold resolute tugging of her gigantic adversary were in no way lost on me nor on the Irishmen. I hoped we might be an hour before we found a hare, for the dog to pull himself weary; and had the Irishman confined the aid he wished to give his dog to a prayer for an instantaneous start, no harm would have been done; but he did not do so. He seized his dog by the stern, thinking that a better thing for him to draw by than by his neck and windpipe, and at the same time he showered on him a continuous score of maledictions, which, though delivered as far as the ears of my greyhound went, in an unknown tongue, yet from their gruffness and tone of anger had the effect of making her crawl, crouching timidly along the ground, looking for anything else than the jump of the hare. I soon stopped my friend of the Emerald Isle, and forbade any interference with greyhounds in the slips. Alas! a hare was found in a few seconds, and Vrayefroy had the Ladies' plate and my greyhound the odd sovereigns. I remember, at the Greenway in 1851, on a day on which we lost the services of our judge, Mr. Hodgson, who is, I think, the best I ever saw, and who so good-naturedly volunteers his presence, and is so kind on all occasions, being put up to decide the courses. Oh! now, my dear Mr. Hodgson! if you read these Reminiscences, don't think that I am this moment on the plan before-mentioned, on the first day's meet of a coursing club, and about "to ask after your family," and "to invite you to drink wine repeatedly," "hoping to see you at the Greenway next November," for I am not on that plan I can assure you. You deserve all the praise, and were I never to run a dog again, you should have it. But to return to my having been put up as judge in the absence of my good and respected friend, Mr. Long, who had been acting for you. Mr. Lawrence's Lark and Mr. Esdaile's Pretty Widow were in the slips; it was late in the day and not much ground before us; and they had a very short course, if I remember rightly, nothing more than a run up, over a very little extent of ground; yet that run up, short as it was, gave me to see so vast a superiority, placed where I was, in Mr. Lawrence's dog's foot over Mr. Esdaile's, that I at once decided the course in Mr. Lawrence's favour. Mr. Esdaile was dissatisfied at being so beaten, and, doubting the correctness of the decision, he made a match on the spot, to be run at the next public meeting on the Deptford Downs. The course then proved my decision to have been just, for Mr. Lawrence's greyhound won the match, as it were, in a canter. I once saw a rough greyhound brought out at the Greenway, not entered for any stake, but as it turned out, to seek a match. What her owner had done to her coat I cannot tell, but certainly it was the best imitation of dirt, mange, and cutaneous disorder I ever beheld. We all jumped at a match with her, and she beat one of my greyhounds hollow. The chief constable, who was out with us, having his eyes always about him, as a chief constable ever should, saw further between the hairs of the greyhound than we did, and mildly took small bets to any amount of half-crowns, and rejoiced exceedingly, though I thought I saw the frown of office peep from under his hat at the deception the owner of the dog had been guilty of. My greyhound Brenda (she sleeps in the sun by my side now), who won the Oaks at the Greenway, in 1842, for a friend of mine, the first season she came out, ran cunning, after winning, from that very hour. The greyhound of Mr. Lawrence's, whom she beat for that stake, beat her in a match the same day. The course was over the same ground and to the same cover, and Brenda, knowing where the hare was going to, took care always in every turn to wait and be next the wood. From being made a drawing-room pet, she became *au fait* at everything, would retrieve to the gun both feather and fur, and would walk at my heels in the midst of hares without running them. At one of the Greenway meetings, when the hares in five courses out of six were beating the dogs, I offered to back Brenda single-handed against a hare. The match was made for a particular field, where there were known good ones, and as she was to go loose at my horse's heels, my adversaries counted also on a wild hare and a long start. They did not know that unless I bade her to go, Brenda, on the slightest sign from me, would remain steady. I therefore took very good care that the hare she saw had no advantage; and one jumping up at a fair distance, Brenda killed her single-handed, and I pocketed a good many half-crowns and agricultural shillings. The annual festival of the Greenway is the only semi-public meeting which I now attend. There the stakes are within a limited means, and the betting as low as the betters please; we cannot hurt each other, while at the same time enough interest is kept up in the competition for prizes to make the meeting most agreeable. The squire keeps open house for all his halls and stables will hold on that occasion, and many of my happiest hours have been spent beneath the Greenway roof. As long as a greyhound is left me, it shall always help to fill up the list of those stakes, for it is a meeting, a county meeting I may call it, so pleasing to gentleman and yeoman, squire and tenant, that for the good of local society every friend of Mr. Lawrence should do his best to keep it up. Between whiles at the coursing meeting, it is pleasing to any man fond of farming to see in the Greenway farmyard as clever a cow and pig as any agriculturist can wish to arrive at. There is a good deal of fun in the round of beef and the leg of pork the Greenway table affords on a cold day, after coursing!

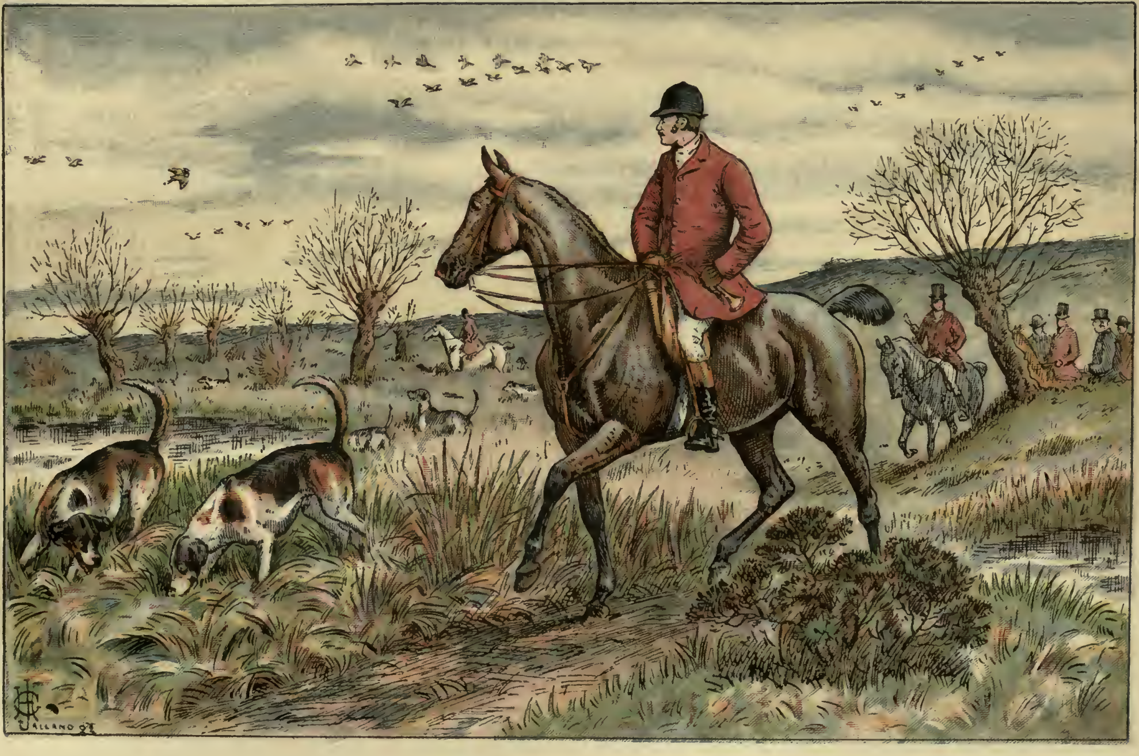
Having had two years' experience of hunting and coursing in Wiltshire, and some wild-fowl shooting, the latter, as I enjoyed it there, is also worthy of notice. In passing the lake at Fonthill, and also in the water in front of Mr. Penruddock's house, still nearer to Teffont, I had observed the various sorts of wild-fowl, and in hard weather I had killed some in the river over which I shot. Upon this I fenced in the little lake on the lawn at Teffont with wattled hurdles, putting the hurdles back in the plantations and pleasure-grounds just out of sight, and on the water put pinioned pairs of the various fowl I had seen—the duck, the pochard, the widgeon, teal, and tufted duck—and in a short time, just at dusk, I could hear the whistling wings of strangers coming to see them. The first time of hard weather, when more stagnant waters were frozen, filled my little lake full of fowl. Gardeners dared not sneeze, much less show themselves, on the margin; and my lake proved so safe and quiet a place that the fowl were confirmed in their haunt of it. The first day I shot on it, I forget the bag, but it was under twenty, of the varieties of the fowl I have named; and ever after that an occasional day at the lake was available. I have often been amused at a trick we used to play the Penruddock fowl, which I hope might be forgiven, considering what a jubilee they always had from their owner, and that they always fed in our river at night. Mr. John Wyndham and myself used to agree on a day on which we would shoot the river, as we were joint proprietors of it, and on the morning of that day he used sometimes to call and pay Mr. Penruddock a visit, when all he had to do was to be transfixed for a moment in passing by the beauty and quantity of wild-fowl he saw. Had he passed on nothing would have occurred; but if he stood but for a few moments in admiration, the strangers of the flock became uneasy, but not much scared, just sufficiently so to make them take flight and drop in the river below. We then honestly sent them home again, taking a tithe by way of payment for the trout spawn they devoured. The geese from the lake at Fonthill used also to feed on my land on Place Farm, and I have frequently, with a number one or a number three cartridge, bagged a couple at a time as they came over my head on their return. The sports of Teffont were very well, but the house was most uncomfortable, and my landlord, to use a mild expression, so odd, that, having legally quashed the lease on account of my landlord's infractions, I left Wiltshire, and took Beacon Lodge of Lord Stuart de Rothesay, where I have continued for the last fourteen years.

# CHAPTER XI

> "And now to this day when the storm is on high,
> And the clouds over Berkeley low'r,
> There are those who affirm that an agonised cry,
> With a thundering hoof as the wind sweeps by,
> May be heard at the midnight hour."
>
> *Witch of Berkeley.*—G. F. B.

As it will now be my province to speak of wild-fowl shooting on a grander scale, the reader will perhaps pardon me for a digression, in taking him to Berkeley Castle, to describe the sports there. Nothing can be more ample than the hunting establishment in men, hounds, and horses, nor more perfect than the show of foxes. A great many of those in the vale round the Castle are artificial or turned-down cubs, but, of course, with the stock always left after a hunting season there are many natural or wild litters. The hills above the vale are natural to foxes, and so are the Cheltenham hills, where they are wild and stout enough in all conscience. There are generally five men in caps with the hounds, in scarlet (alas! not in tawny coats), a huntsman, two whippers-in, and three men on second horses. As I have said before, I think the huntsman, Harry Ayris, one of the best men with hounds I ever saw. To give the reader some idea of the amount of foxes I have seen in the vale, I remember taking Mr. Drax from Charborough Park to Berkeley Castle in October, to convince him that at Berkeley, where there were so many pheasants and hares, there were forty foxes where Mr. Drax had one. I did so for the purpose of proving to him that it was possible to have foxes, hares, and pheasants in any amount together when the soil did not suit game, and, therefore, at such a place as Charborough, where the soil was most favourable to game, the fact of the show of game and foxes was more easily attainable at Charborough Park than at Berkeley Castle. All that was required was, that the squire of the one should be as resolute to accomplish it as the peer of the other. On one of the days Mr. Drax was out at Berkeley we killed nine foxes. To be sure, there is this to be said, that the number of acres at Berkeley Castle outstretch those at Charborough Park; but, if Charborough is the extent I have always understood it to be, and, in fact, have seen it to be, there is no reason why Mr. Drax should not have any quantity of game and foxes on his immediate acres. A fox certainly requires a wider circle of friends, and perhaps the Castle, from hereditary respect for the battlements, had the advantage; but the hare and pheasant never have and do not require more friends than the lord of the soil, as, in all counties, all men kill whatever Heaven sends on their lands, and the proprietor of thirty acres, down to an acre and a half, invariably deems himself right in exterminating all that comes within his reach, without contributing an egg or leveret to the stock of his neighbours. When I first knew Mr. Drax he had a lot of men in his employ called gamekeepers, but, on the whole extent of his acreage, I could not have gone out and killed twenty head of pheasants and hares; and this in the face of my father's assertion, that I remember hearing as a boy, "that, take it in any way, Charborough Park," in the time of my grandmother (who was a Miss Drax), "was famed above all other places for its variety of sporting attractions." I have no hesitation in asserting that, excepting Heron Court, Lord Malmsbury's seat, Charborough Park is the best place for all sorts of sport I ever saw. In fact, Charborough by its variety surpasses Heron Court, in having excellent trout fishing, and red and fallow deer, fox-hunting and coursing, as well as, with good management, the best of wild-fowl shooting. So extensive are the wilds of Charborough, that the wild-fowl for the gun do not interfere with the fowl of the decoy; on the contrary, the gun, by driving to the decoy, assists in its return. I did, literally speaking, sit on that wild moor by the side of the decoy one day when the hounds met there; for, on reaching carelessly out of my saddle to shake an acquaintance by the hand, between the grasp, my own carelessness, and the design of my horse Brock, I was let into the heather. I say, that to sit and see the hounds splash through the water to draw the immense bog around the decoy for a fox, the air darkened with teal chiefly, mingled with other fowl, and black game and snipes getting up all round you, is a delight in itself, without the merry challenge from hound to hound as on the line of the fox they spring from hag to hag. The Charborough decoy is a sure find, and then a certain scurry over the short heather. But to return; my present theme is Berkeley Castle.

As I have stated, the hunting establishment at Berkeley Castle is on the most ample and perfect footing; and, without fearing a charge of being predisposed to the castle-bred hounds, I assert, that I would sooner have one puppy thence than three from any other sort I ever tried in the whole course of my experience. The late Lord Ducie never lost an opportunity of running those hounds down; but, as I consider his judgment on hunting not to have been anything like the very best, it never made any impression on me. I have ever found the sort combine the finest nose with the most complete constitution, stoutness, and resolution, at the same time that the temper is tractable and affectionate. From the kennel to the deer-park, there is excellent management; one fault only existing in the deer-park, and that is a fault on the right side, which is, the fact of keeping on too many old bucks, bucks that never would be better, and who, by their number during the rutting season, risk the lives of younger deer, by stabbing them with their horns. I think the deer at Berkeley average about a thousand head, besides the herd of red deer, and finer venison it is not possible to taste. The park stands on a hill a mile from the Castle; but there used to be a sort of home park, in which, in former times, were kept the red deer. It was in that park



"Drawing Charborough decoy."

*G. H. Jalland.*

*Facing p.* 180.

where Queen Elizabeth, in a fit of anger, destroyed the deer, because the Lord Berkeley, instead of being at his Castle to meet the Queen, who had intimated her intention to pay him a visit, left home rather than receive her. Attached to the domain is a beautiful chase, called St. Michael's or Micklewood Chase; and as, since the enclosure, the whole of it has been ceded to the Castle, were it mine, I would soon throw up a rough forest fence, like the one of the Brigstock forest in Northamptonshire, and fill it with red, fallow, and roe deer. Micklewood Chase affords a good example of what gamekeepers should do, in regard to the care of timber, while protecting the game. The timber on it, which of course belonged to the lord of the manor, was so well preserved, that, when the enclosure took place, it was worth more than the fee-simple of the land, consequently those to whom the land was allotted in lieu of common right declined to pay for the timber, and thus the whole chase fell into the Castle estate. It was in regard to this chase that the memorable trials took place, as to the question of whether or not holly might be cut as brushwood by those having common rights. By an error in the pleadings of the lord of the manor, he was defeated; nevertheless, he gave notice to the winning party that if they continued to cut holly, he would renew the actions at law. Backed by their success, and disbelieving that they owed it to accident, fresh hollies were cut and other actions brought, every one of which were given in the lord of the manor's favour, and the fact established that holly, in the eye of the law, was timber, and therefore not available to the rights of common.

Neither pains nor expense are spared at Berkeley in the preservation of game; and certainly, considering the deep, rich, heavy loam of which the soil consists, and the number of foxes, I never saw game preserved with greater success. The angling at Berkeley is confined to a few ponds and brooks, and to the Gloucester and Berkeley Canal, and is not worth speaking of; the Severn affording salmon fishing with everything but the rod. The seine fishing there is very good, and as the royalty of the Severn is attached to the Castle, the whale and the sturgeon when they come are its due. There are two decoys for wild-fowl which answer completely, and which are also beautifully kept up: but I have now to describe a sport which I have never seen anywhere else. Immense flocks of wild-geese are in the habit, from September till April, of feeding on some large grazing meadows by the side of the Severn, called the New Grounds, and the geese in their coming and going never vary above a day or two, but are as sure to arrive, in small numbers at first, as the month in the year comes round. I have almost killed myself with laughter at what I have seen, when Lord Fitzhardinge takes the field, on what is really a wild-goose chase! Conceive his lordship, followed by a string of six or seven men, guests and keepers, and crawling along in the mud beneath the Severn's bank; the flocks of geese being on the meadows, and about to be driven over his head. They may have to creep down to the bank of the Severn, under cover of a hedge, in a field filled with fat oxen inclined for a lark, or sleek and wanton heifers. The bovine attention all at once becomes curiously fixed on the string of men crawling all-fours, and the herd advance upon the crawlers, not quite sure whether they are men or dogs. The last man in the line perhaps is a guest, who, being a predestinarian, and born under the sign Taurus, religiously believes, after his fashion, that his end is to be on the horns of a mad bull—and he is therefore horrified when a huge Durham crossed ox, or one of the old Gloucestershire breed, with horns nearly as wide as the Spanish cattle, and with points to them like the brow-antlers of a deer, leading on his fellows, smells to him wonderingly from behind. The guest is on the point of shrieking, to the entire frustration of the day's sport, when the leading ox gives a short grunt, or playfully constrained bellow, approaching to a very loud or choking cough, and with an unwieldy kick sets the whole herd dancing. The grunt of the beast, imperfectly heard by the leader of the shooting party, is deemed at once to have proceeded from some one of his followers; he halts, therefore, and turning his head in inquiring rage, demands in dumb show, "Who did it?" The look is endeavoured to be conveyed from one to the other, for had any noise been made by the next man to his lordship, he would have been sure to have looked it on to his neighbour, rather than have braved the consequence himself; but in the instance I am speaking of each man looks behind him, and the last man collecting the looks of all bestows it on the ox in the concentrated state of a sportsman's lozenge, and the line proceeds again. "Hush! no noise," being still the order, and the mud beneath the bank of the river having been attained, serving-men and guests creep on; their leader halts suddenly to listen to the geese, and, as in a string of carriages in London, when coachmen have not their horses in hand, and poles and panels become acquainted, butt goes the nearest man's head against him, which he of course hits at. Dumb show of objurgation having been continued by the leader for a few moments, during which he strikes at imaginary heads in the air, the line proceeds again, when very likely the tenacious mud sucks a hold of some follower's boot, said boot extricating itself with a loud pop like a ginger-beer bottle. The leader halts once more, and in dumb show now signs to the assembly at large that "if that occurs again he'll go home:" at the same time he addresses a look of furious inquiry to the man next him, who, as usual, answers the silent appeal by a glance of suspicion on his next neighbour, who carries on the question to the neighbour behind him, and so on till it gets to the last man, who, being the last living thing in sight, replies by a look of indignant as well as injured innocence, and finally the line proceeds to a termination. The leader then points with a finger to the mud, and a man drops into it, and so on till all are placed and he has assumed his station: by this time the goose-driver has circumvented the flocks, and a beautiful shot or two come over the keepers' as well as the guests' heads, but they all refrain from shooting lest they should miss, and be deemed to have made a noise for nothing, and have frightened the geese, or spoilt their leader's sport: the geese then perhaps come over the leader, who lets go with two guns at them immediately, and in all probability brings down two geese, for he shoots very well; the instant the leader's gun is off, bang! bang! bang! go everybody else, at any distance, resolved to have some fun while it is safe to do so.

These guns herein mentioned were similar to the one used by the noted goose-stalking Roxburghshire blacksmith, who, at the request of Lord Wemyss, showed his lordship how to load his weapon, and then the way in which he was to stalk and kill a wild-goose. Having called on the smith in his shop, the man produced from a corner, from the midst of other rusty old iron, a bell-muzzled gun about six feet long, and going to an old flower-pot not far off the forge, he dipped his hand into it, and produced rather an extensive palm filled with powder: this he trickled down the gun, topping it up with a large wad of brown paper. The sporting artificer next dived his arm into a promiscuous heap of ashes and old iron, and grasped as many nail heads and fragments of his trade as his fingers could compass, when these three-cornered and incongruous remnants were dropped in after the powder, and again crammed with brown paper, till the tallness of the charge within was only surpassed by the height of the instrument without. Having loaded his gun, assuring his lordship that these missiles were infinitely more deadly than shot, the blacksmith led the way to the wilds in which a flock of geese were feeding. Lord Wemyss from the high ground watched the sequel. Nothing could be better or more sportsmanlike than the way the smith availed himself of every rise or fall in the land to cover his approach; but, not content with getting to within the usual wild-fowl distance, the illustrator of the noble art still crawled on till there was some doubt in the spectator's mind if the geese would not be aroused to a sense of their danger by a thrust from the old bell-muzzle. The stalker, however, paused at the distance of about thirty yards, took ten minutes' aim, and then an enormous report was heard amidst a volume of smoke and cries from the wild-geese, who rose in much confusion, leaving one or two fluttering on the ground behind them. The smoke clearing away, the blacksmith was at first invisible, until with some difficulty Lord Wemyss made him out stretched and motionless on the ground. Fearful that the gun had burst, his lordship hastened to the spot, and on his arrival found the smith with the gun a few yards from him, but still insensible. In a few moments consciousness began to return, and the first words the smith uttered were, "Well dune, old gall," which his lordship, deeming to be a sort of delirious conversation, cut across with a serious request to know how he could expect to be alive after firing off such a dangerously crammed implement of universal destruction. The smith, still eyeing his gun with intense approbation, reached out his arm and patted the stock, "Wall," he said, "my lord, nae dout she's dangerous to the fowl, but she's used me wall this time, it tacks twenty minutes gude afore I comes to myself, when I lets her off on most occasions, but I always gets my goose." The only difference between the guests at Berkeley Castle and our Roxburgh blacksmith is, that the latter got his goose, while the former never touched a feather.

The geese, if properly taken as they come towards the shooter, and almost directly over the gun, when killed, fall behind the gunners in the mud; and generally one or two of the guests are seen with bloody noses, and holding their right arms in hideous positions, as if their shoulders were out, it being settled by the leader, that old single-barrelled overgrown muskets, with bell-mouths, five feet eight in the barrel, and hammers that carry a flag-stone for a flint, with pans the size of soup-tureens, and stocks so short that a man's nose rests on his thumb when he takes aim and pulls the trigger, are the only things that men *shall* kill geese with. One or two wounded men are always seen in this dilapidated state lying in the mud, their hats flown off and gone to sea, and the engine which they had let off sticking upright on its muzzle, the heaviest part about it, and threatening to fall on them.

"Measter So-and-so," asks a sly old keeper under his breath, "what be the matter with you?"

"Oh!" replies the guest, with a suppressed groan, "my shoulder's out."

"No 'teant," says the old keeper, scratching his head and apparently ruminating on the scene: "thay do all zay so, as do shoot wi' her, but I never knowed none an 'em but what got well by dinner time." The keepers then take the old "long guns," and, slanting them, reload, for none of them, were the guns held perpendicularly, could load them without a ladder, the guests beseeching them to put in only a squib. The guests, however, handle the guns again; but, unless the keepers give them a compassionate wink, take very good care not to get another shot. I am afraid, as I always shot if a goose came within distance, and used a heavy double Manton of eleven gauge, with a number one long-distance cartridge, and refused to hug the old tubes, that I never at the Castle was a favourite goose-shooter. One day, in particular, I remember Lord Fitzhardinge, and Mr. Craven Berkeley, and myself only were of the goosing party, when, as the geese were in the best of humours for sport, and kept flying in small plumps up and down the course of the river only a little way inland, we manned a hedgerow that thwarted their line of flight. His lordship stopped nearest the river, Mr. Craven Berkeley next him, and myself on the extreme right. The geese, I suppose, not knowing where the owner of the lands on which they fed was, took to the most inland flight, and bang! bang! bang! went the eleven-gauge, and down came two or three great grey geese. They all fell well behind me; and as lots of geese were coming the same line, and the order being not to show oneself, I refrained from picking them up, and loaded away to be ready for more. My annoyance was great when Mr. Craven Berkeley called to me that our leader was up and going elsewhere, and had sent him to tell me to come, and "not make any more useless noise." When this message was delivered to me, neither of my brothers knew that I had made anything but an useless noise, and, as they had not had a shot, I was highly amused when I reached them, carrying at my back the geese, and saw their disappointed faces; but there was no more allusion to "an useless noise." Ever after that I declined to go goose-shooting, and amused myself on goosing days with my greyhounds. On any day during the period I have mentioned Lord Fitzhardinge has it in his power to say "he will go goose-shooting," as much as he has it in his power to determine he will pheasant shoot, or anything else. At times, and in hard weather, the geese number many thousands, and the noise they make then when they rise is astonishing. They get used to the shepherds or cow-herds, and to the under-keepers or "runners," as they are locally called, and will let them come within forty or fifty yards of them; and, on horseback in a red coat, I myself have ridden among them in about that distance, or certainly within eighty yards. A very strange sight it is to see on those rich grazing meadows, which carry immense droves of cattle, thousands of wild-geese mingled with cows and oxen, and often have I longed to be allowed to stalk them with what in Pool Harbour would be termed a great shoulder-gun; oh, what a sweep might in that way be had at them! I am almost afraid to say what I think, supposing the day to be favourable, and the geese in what is called "good humour" for it, Lord Malmsbury, Lord Ossulston, and myself could kill. I mention their guns as being the best I know to make a good bag, from the wild bull in Chillingham Park, and the stag on the mountains at Auchnacarry, down to the eagle and the wild-swan, and other varied description of strange fowl, besides wild-ducks, teal, widgeon, geese, woodcocks, snipes, pheasants, partridges, and hares, that haunt the rivers and manors of Heron Court. When wild-goose shooting is mentioned, men couple it with bogs, morasses, water, or the Pontine Marshes; but at Berkeley Castle you have it in the greatest perfection, clean, neat, and verdant, so that, but for the coolness of the attire at that season, the finest dancing-master might step after them in pumps and silk stockings. In addition to this, is the immense satisfaction in knowing that no other guns than those from the castle can or dare be heard in the vicinity. There are geese on your own lands, exceeding occasionally ten thousand, as much yours as if they were roasted and on the dining-table, that is, if you can get at them, and this I have no doubt the three guns I have mentioned could amply do. Lord Fitzhardinge, one season, bagged to his own gun ninety-nine geese; and, considering that, weather permitting, he hunts four days a week, and shoots game on the other two, and was then only at Berkeley Castle alternate months throughout the winter, unless he shot on Sunday, which he did not do, he had not much time, save in occasional frosts, to accomplish such a collective bag. Any man accustomed to any species of woodcraft, or chase of wild things, whether feathered or four-footed, must know that it is not anything like the most successful way, always to attempt their capture or death in one unvaried manner. Geese, geese though they are, will very soon be down on the danger of flying over one bank within shot, if from that bank, when driven, they are always shot at. The lesser wild-fowl at Heron Court become so in regard to the "gazes," or hiding-places on Lord Malmsbury's rivers. Towards the end of the season; and, in the history of birds, and study of their nature, I have undoubtedly observed that they have some means of communicating danger to others of their species, not merely an approaching or imminent danger, but a dangerous thing to be avoided thence and thereafter; and this caution is taught to the generation that are coming in the egg, as well as to stranger-fowl who have had no personal or local experience. Curious as this assertion is, and unaccountable as is the fact, though I have observed it generally, I will give the last instance that has freshened on my observation, and in testimony of its truth I refer the reader to the railway porters and plate-layers. When the electric wires were first put up, a vast number of birds which in windy weather fly swiftly and low, killed themselves in their flight by concussion with the wires. These victims consisted chiefly of golden plovers, black game, grouse, woodcocks, snipes, partridges, and occasionally wood-pigeons, pheasants, and a few other birds; but since the wires have been up, now a space of some years, the deaths by birds flying against them have considerably decreased. Take the line through the New Forest: there, since the most salutary law introduced by his late Royal Highness the Duke of

Cambridge, that there should be no shooting of any sort of game in it till the first of October, wild game of all sorts have decidedly increased; yet not so many as before fly against the electric wires. This could arise from no individual experience in the younger birds, whether bred there or migrated from other places; but it must be on account of some intuition or newly instilled inherent caution, and it is not to be accounted for in any other way. The wild-geese killed at Berkeley Castle are in fine condition and excellent eating, consisting of four different species,—the grey lag, the white-fronted goose, the bean-goose, and the pink-toed goose. I doubt myself if the latter be a different species, but am inclined to attribute the more delicate hue of the foot to birds only of a younger age. The hue of a leg in any bird is infinitely too slight a distinction by which to pronounce it a different species; but naturalists, like every other class of cognoscenti, are always inclined to establish some new fact, and very often in so doing find a mare's nest. The leg of an old partridge is white, and the leg of the young birds in their first year of a yellowish hue; and if you carry out the inspection to the innumerable variety in leg of the barn-door fowls, and by their different hues attempt to establish a different species, the English language would hardly find words enough by which to distinguish the breeds. People talk of two different species of the fox, the common fox and the greyhound fox, founding the difference on the length of limb or different growth in one and the same animal. This *is nonsense;* and I believe it is much on the same erroneous principle as that as to the pink-toed geese.[1] There are different sized puppies in every litter, and the same fact applies to foxes. There is also a very extraordinary change in the flocks of geese that haunt the new grounds at Berkeley Castle; it is, that at a period of the winter the species congregating there change. For instance, up to a given period, though at this moment I forget the month, the flocks, with little exception, consist of the great grey goose: after that the grey geese almost entirely disappear, and the white-fronted goose fills their place. This change, though the geese are narrowly watched, and a report of their numbers frequently returned to the castle, is never seen to take place; no flights are observed to come and go, but the flocks apparently remain stationary, though the grey goose leaves the ground. There have been occasional instances of white geese appearing among them, to which the cow-herds or farmers' men have approached so near that they could be sure of the species; but, from no crafty steps having been taken to kill them, these rare specimens have hitherto escaped. I have often availed myself of different disguises to obtain a shot at deer; and, by dressing as a woman in a red cloak, I have inspected a herd, and selected the finest buck at forty yards' distance. The same herd would not have let me come within a mile of them had I been in my usual attire. What then should hinder the same fact applying to wild-geese, when it is evident that they fear not the cow-herds and shepherds, to whose sight they are accustomed? I know that one excuse for not shooting at them in the most killing way, is, a fear of disgusting them with, or scaring them away from, their haunts. There would be much in this fear, if the plan was not used in moderation; but a stalk at them now and then would not have the dreaded effect.

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[1] The pink-footed goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*) resembles the bean-goose (*A. fabalis*) very closely. But the feet and band on the bill of the bean-goose are orange, those of the pink-footed goose are pink.—Ed.

Having taken up my residence at Beacon Lodge, in Hampshire, the first thing that I looked to was the sport to be had in its vicinity. The late Lord Stuart de Rothesay conceded to me the shooting and preservation of the two farms attached to Highcliffe; and, in addition to this, I received the Royal licence to shoot game in the New Forest. I also had unlimited leave from the late Sir George Jervis to shoot when I pleased over Hinton Admiral, and his farms lying at Christchurch Head and Wick; and Sir George Rose gave me the shooting over his land. I must say, that of all places I ever was in, where all were masters and no men, I never met with anything like the insubordinate state of the vicinity of Beacon Lodge. There was a notorious poacher named Clark, who had been for nearly a twelvemonth at large, in defiance of the magistrates' summons and warrant, which latter, when the constable came to execute, the offender compelled his retreat from the cottage at the muzzle of his poaching gun. The offence he had committed was, in threatening to beat out the brains of one of Sir George Rose's sons, Mr. William Rose, I believe, for interfering with him when poaching in a cover called Chewton Bunney, the property of Sir George Rose. The brother of this man was similarly situated in regard to contempt for all magisterial authority; and he too not only was at large, but openly living in the cottage with his brother, within three miles of the bench whereat the warrants were signed for their apprehension. Two kings of Brentford cannot be coeval; and, according to that adage, this fellow Clark made a boast that he would never be put down by me. He continued to poach, and tried to have it in his power to say he had shot before my face. To gain some foundation for this boast, he came out on Chewton Common while I was on it, and shot a snipe, taking very good care to keep half a mile away from me. Having tried to approach him as if carelessly, he seemed to come to the conclusion that an encounter would probably take place; so he left the common and entered a cottage. On this I knocked at the cottage door, called him by name, and told him if he would come out with his gun on the common I would take it from him, for that I had seen him use both dog and gun in shooting game. I was too far off to see what it was he killed, though I saw him stoop to pick it up. He made no reply: so I went to the nearest justice, Mr. Hopkins, and having stated who it was I was after, and the facts as to the former summons and warrant, requested that I might be sworn in as a special constable to take him. When I made this application it was chiefly with a view to the former warrant, but Mr. Hopkins objected, as I had a charge against him, though he had no objection to swear in any other man specially, to take him under the charge then made. A man was soon found in the person of my butler, Cratchley. I was perfectly satisfied with this, and told him to call on me and my keepers to aid and assist. I offered also to take the brother of the man if the warrant for him was given me, but this the magistrate declined; so we only took the man against whom I had the charge of poaching. His brother was by, but did not interfere; our prisoner, as he very soon was, used a sharp-pointed carving-knife to defend himself, and resisted as much as he could, till he got a broken head, and that settled the affair. This all happened in the afternoon of the day on which the poaching act was committed, when, as we were taking our prisoner away, his mother said he couldn't go without his hat; she ran in and fetched it, and as she turned it up to put it on his head, he being in handcuffs, the snipe fell out of the lining that I had seen him shoot in the morning. This and a few other captures soon settled the question as to who was to be master of the land I shot over; though on the fifth of November the men of the little village by Beacon Lodge, known then by the name of "Slop Pond," blackened their faces, dressed up three figures to represent me, my gamekeeper, and butler, and beat and then burnt them in a bonfire on the high road. I was not at home at the time, or, as the fire was in an illegal situation, in all probability I should have danced a war-dance by the light of it. All hostility at last subsided. Mr. Clark and his associates, on a second conviction which I gained against him, left the place, and many of those men who burnt me in effigy would now do the same by any one else if they thought it pleased me. They come to me for advice in all local disputes, and to write letters for them; and they behave so well that they can have from me game or a couple of rabbits whenever they ask for it. I soon found I could deal with the country people very well: it was some of what are called the middling and upper classes who continued to misconduct themselves. For instance, the tenant of Chewton Farm, under Sir George Rose, who was permitted to kill rabbits with a gun, would persist in firing at partridges; and, having been caught by my keeper, Target, in the fact, when on the spot, insisted he had shot at a rabbit. The quaint rejoinder of the keeper was, "Then it's the first rabbit I ever see fly through the air!" I reported it to Sir George Rose, and asked leave to proceed against the tenant, but Sir George Rose objected to my doing so; so because he gave me the shooting I refrained. Soon after this Sir George resumed the shooting. This tenant subsequently gave up the farm, and the next man who took it was permitted to carry a gun to frighten—they very seldom kill—the rabbits; and as this farm adjoins my pleasure grounds, and comes within a hundred and fifty yards of my house, I well knew that, with no keeper over him, the new tenant, if inclined so to do, would shoot at every head of tame game I reared. I cared not how much he shot Sir George Rose's partridges, for I thought that served his landlord right; but I was resolved to punish him if he came near my grounds. As I expected, he used to live all his leisure hours under the hedge of my little gorse cover, taking good care to keep his side of the ditch, and when he thought no one was looking he fired into the tame coveys of birds that fed at the drawing-room window and from Mrs. Berkeley's hand. Many a shot he got at what my keeper, James Dewy, now at Spetchley Park, called "a guy"; this was no other than a rabbit-skin rudely stuffed, and set up on his land as if at feed. After crawling for some hundred yards, he got a shot at this, and then Dewy would rise from the gorse in peals of laughter, and cry out, "What! not killed 'un yet? Dang it, I never heard tell of so stout a rabbut." One year the crop was beans, and, while the man in charge of them hoed on one way, Dewy crept out the other and set up the guy for the labourer to see when he came back: as he expected, the man saw the rabbit, and down he went on hands and knees till he had come within reach, when he got up and broke his hoe over the "stout 'un." Dewy, as usual, was there to laugh immoderately, saying, "What! you ha'nt done for him yet, then? Your master has wasted many charges of powder and shot at that poor thing, and now thou hast broken thy hoe." The labourer himself laughed immoderately at the imposition and quaintness of Dewy. At last this tenant, at dusk one evening, when he thought the coast was clear, fired into the midst of a tame covey which had flown over my fence to jug or roost on his stubble; he wounded three or four, and two fell dead on my land. Up got Dewy, who witnessed the whole transaction. "Worse nor the rabbut this!" he cried; "and it'll cost thee a good deal more." His remark was perfectly true, for the tenant had to pay a fine of ten pounds under the Tax Acts, and, all too late, the cost of a game certificate, besides expenses; in addition to this, he was fined for cutting and using a portion of my hedgerow. Upon this farm now is located an excellent farmer and man, named Hailey. I used to rent the shooting of the farm he had before he came to this; and in the thirteen years I have known him I never had reason to be displeased. If it ever falls to my lot to have a farm to let, and he wanted one, he should not be five minutes at a loss.

## CHAPTER XII

"He thought a trust so great, so good a cause,
Was only to be kept by guarding laws;
For public blessings firmly to secure,
We must a lessening of the good endure.
The public waters are to none denied;
All drink the stream, but only few must guide.
The Constitution was the ark that he
Join'd to support with zeal and sanctity."—Crabbe.

I know no place more deserving of sporting notice than Heron Court; and Lord Malmsbury combines in his person every knowledge of what is due to a country life, as well as the more refined attributes of London society. In this last year, 1852, we have seen him leave his manors and rivers, his farms and his gun, and, when called on to assist the Prime Minister, Lord Derby, with a firm hand and thoroughly enlarged mind guide the foreign policy of the United Kingdom; and leave the interests of his country peaceably and honourably maintained, his sovereign on the best of terms with every foreign power. His more important duties over, and a change in the government taking place, with honour he returns to his hospitable hall, resumes the gun, and is as much of the country gentleman and sportsman as ever. Lord Malmsbury is an excellent illustration of what a country gentleman and sportsman should be, as recommended to the rising generation in the commencement of this work. He has not permitted his love of field sports to overwhelm the more important and refined duties and accomplishments of life; but in his leisure hours he can be a perfect sportsman, and when the crown requires it an able minister.

The late Lord Malmsbury kept a journal of his sporting life, even to the quantity of powder and shot he used, the things he killed each day, the time he was out, the distance he walked, and the weather — shooting after the approved fashion of his day, not in battues, but without the stops to the running game now so universally adopted. With Lord Malmsbury's consent I have extracted from this journal the following information :—

[FROM THE LATE LORD MALMSBURY'S JOURNAL.]

*Grand summary of game and fowl shot on Heron Court manors and shooting beats in thirty-nine seasons, from* 1801 *to* 1840 *inclusive.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Black Game | 184 |
| Partridges | 9,331 |
| Quails | 8 |
| Landrails | 118 |
| Pheasants | 10,292 |
| Woodcocks | 1,387 |
| Snipes | 5,375 |
| Wild Swans | 11 |
| Wild Geese | 22 |
| Ducks | 2,885 |
| Widgeon | 122 |
| Teal | 1,371 |
| Other fowl | 389 |
| Bitterns | 22 |
| Hares | 9,494 |
| Rabbits | 14,990 |
| Total | 56,001 |

*Grand total killed by the late Lord Malmsbury, in forty seasons, to his own gun, from* 1798 *to* 1840.

| | |
|---|---|
| Black Game | 81 |
| Partridges | 10,744 |
| Quails | 50 |
| Sandrails | 95 |
| Pheasants | 6,320 |
| Woodcocks | 1,080 |
| Snipes | 4,694 |
| Wild Swans | 3 |
| Wild Geese | 8 |
| Other fowl | 2,756 |
| Bitterns | 10 |
| Golden Plover | 6 |
| Hares | 5,211 |
| Rabbits | 7,417 |
| Total | 38,475 |

*Summary of shots killed and missed in forty seasons, ending* 1840.

| | |
|---|---|
| Shots | 54,987 |
| Killed | 38,221 |
| Missed | 16,766 |
| Days out | 3,645 |

Allowing the distance walked at two miles and a half per hour, according to the noble journalist's account, he would have covered a distance of 36,200 miles, or very nearly once and a half of the circumference of the globe; and during that time he was never confined to his bed one day by sickness or accident—firing away about 750 pounds' weight of powder, and four tons of shot.

The crowning day of the Heron Court wild-fowl shooting, however, was destined to be deferred till the 31st January 1853, when the present Lords Malmsbury and Anson, accompanied by Mr. George Bentinck, took the beat on the Moors River; Lord Anson and Mr. Bentinck were posted, and Lord Malmsbury drove the water. It was three hours before he reached the posts of his friends, their firing without stirring a foot, continuous; and when they compared bags, Lord Malmsbury had forty-five teal, and they had lying around them one hundred. The day's bag consisted of two pheasants, a rabbit, three ducks, and 177 teal.

On the 21st of February, Lord Malmsbury and myself took the same beat; I was posted, and he drove the river. Our bag on that day, late as the season was, was a woodcock, a golden plover, seven ducks, and thirty-four teal. The following will give some idea of the variety of game at Heron Court:—

*Summary by gun*, 1852-53.

| | |
|---|---|
| Blackcocks | 11 |
| Hares | 82 |
| Rabbits | 92 |
| Pheasants | 341 |
| Partridges | 243 |
| Woodcocks | 13 |
| Snipes | 176 |
| Ducks | 103 |
| Teal | 609 |
| Widgeon | 2 |
| Tufted Ducks | 3 |
| Pochard | 5 |
| Pintail Ducks | 1 |
| Golden Eye | 2 |
| Shoveller | 2 |
| Landrail | 1 |
| Golden Plover | 2 |
| Total | 1688 |

*The vermin destroyed by the keepers in* 1852 *are thus given*:—

| | |
|---|---|
| Squirrels | 220 |
| Jackdaws | 210 |
| Woodpeckers | 50 |
| Hedgehogs | 250 |
| Cats | 52 |
| Stoats | 90 |
| Magpies<br>Jays | 95 |
| Hawks | 60 |
| Rats | 300 |
| Total | 1327 |

Or almost a head of vermin for each of game and fowl.

In the keeper's list there is no mention made of the weasel, a species of vermin in which Hampshire abounds;—they may be included in the list of stoats. I am not inclined to reckon the woodpecker as vermin, because, like the mole, he only haunts the rotten tree for food and nesting, as the mole does the land for insects, which, but for him, would devastate the crop.[1] The tomtit, that gardeners pronounce to be so destructive to the bud, eats not the bud, but only takes off the bloom to get at the insect who had already commenced destruction. His beak points to the fact that he only feeds on insects: not so the finch tribe, they will eat the bud. However, let my readers take my advice, and never give the gardener a gun to shoot at the alleged enemies, imaginary or real, for where the bird picks off one bud, the gardener, in his sport, shoots off and bruises or destroys whole boughs, and is by far the greater bore of the two. Nothing can be more curious nor better defined as to the food of the soft and hard-billed birds, than the fact elicited by changing the eggs in the nest, and controverting the mothers. The food of the soft-beaked birds, such as robins, hedge-sparrows, wrens, starlings, thrushes, and blackbirds will suit each other; and a wren will rear a thrush or the thrush the wren so far as feeding goes; and the same with the starling, with this only difference, that as the wren and the starling are bred in the one instance in a hole, and in the other in a nest so peculiarly constructed that the young bird can't fall out, if their eggs are hatched in an open nest, the young, having no instinctive care for their safety *in that position*, are sure to tumble out. I have, through a change of eggs, seen wrens bring up a young thrush to the destruction, I regret to say, of foster brothers and sisters, for the larger bird was sure to stifle them or heave them from the nest. When the young thrush grew large he was confined in the nest, like a toad in a hole, with only his head protruding for food, it was then curious to see the tiny parents of his adoption clinging to their little moss-made home, while they fed his constantly gaping mouth with insects. A mistletoe thrush, under whom I put a rook's egg, without taking away her own, on discovering the dreadful-looking brat she had hatched, seized it at once and flung it out of the nest; and, therefore, in making these exchanges, care should be taken to have the whole sitting of one kind. I never knew but one exception as to birds whose natural nest was in a hole, and their not falling out of an open one, and that was when I put some jackdaw's eggs under a blackbird. The blackbird hatched them (to be sure her nest was against a wall, so they were fenced in on one side), and fed them regularly; and her food, though the bill was different, seemed to suit them. The old blackbirds were so put to it to support the four young daws, that they were for ever hopping about the lawn in apparent haste, and looking as though they were worn by their unwonted exertions. One morning on visiting the nest I found all the nestlings dead, and their mouths very dirty, as if they had been fed with clay. Whether or not the patience of the birds had been exhausted by their inordinate craving for food, and, as it is reported of the goldfinch, they poisoned them, I cannot say; the fact is as I tell it. I have never been able to make up my mind as to the well-known legend of the goldfinch. Cottagers and all country people believe that, if they go too often near the young goldfinches in their cage, they will one day find them all suddenly dead; and of the fact of their simultaneous and sudden deaths, when so confined to be fed by the old birds, I have myself been more than once aware. Ferrets will destroy their young if looked at or touched too often or too soon, and so will rabbits; and there may be something of the same animus in birds, when, as they cannot eat their young, as the ferret and rabbit will do, they may have some other means of destroying life.

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[1] Certainly it is only a proof of barbarous ignorance to suspect woodpeckers of doing injury to game or their eggs—Ed.

Some people suppose that the kestrel or windhover hawk is not a vermin; and I have even seen it set down by a writer claiming to be a naturalist and sporting authority, that that hawk has been erroneously denounced as a destroyer of game. All I know is, that I have shot dozens of them in the act of carrying off my young pheasants and partridges, as well as chickens from the hen-coops, besides finding the legs of young game in their nests, and shooting them in the fields in the act of eating young partridges.[1] Snakes will take young partridges and pheasants recently hatched, or, indeed, anything alive that they can swallow; and I have no doubt but that the adder will do the same. Squirrels are very destructive to young plantations, particularly to the fir, taking off the whole of the year's shoot, and eating it, besides sucking the eggs of game, which I once shot them doing. I saw by the manner in which the squirrel handled the egg and carried it up a tree, that he knew very well what he was about; and ever after that, where there was a preserve of pheasants, I have killed them. When there are no pheasants their graceful agility and pretty ways have saved them from my gun. Speaking of pets, my poor cormorant, who, though a female, went by the name of Jack, had the oddest ways of showing her attachment I ever saw. The hops she gave and the faces she made, with a prolonged "Oh" at the end of them, her sea-green eyes, brilliant with affection when she came to me on the lawn, were, though uncouth, very entertaining. Her games at play with the graceful gazelle were extraordinary, and it was not possible to see more different creatures joining in one common sport than those two pets presented in their happy hours. The gazelle bounding all-fours around and over the cormorant, and the cormorant uttering short hoarse notes and trying to peck her, and waddling after the deer in the hope of a closer meeting. Then the gazelle would threaten to butt with her horns, which always made the cormorant get very upright and thin, the plumage drawn closely to the body, as if well aware of the danger; when if the gazelle did charge, the cormorant was obliged to shuffle and dodge out of the way; but if she succeeded to meet the soft nose of the gazelle with her powerfully sharp beak, the gazelle would bound yards into the air, and relinquish the mimic battle. Poor Zellie lies in a little wood adjacent to the lawn at Beacon, beneath a stone, near the last home of other favourites, on which is the following inscription from the pen of her sorrowing owner:—

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[1] I believe this to be a misstatement. Occasionally the kestrel gets into the vicious habit of frequenting coops where young pheasants are, and preying on the chicks, in which case, of course, it must be destroyed. But the staple food of this beautiful little falcon consists of mice, voles and insects, and although I have closely watched kestrels, and caused them to be strictly preserved on my estates, I have never known them do the slightest injury to game.—Ed.

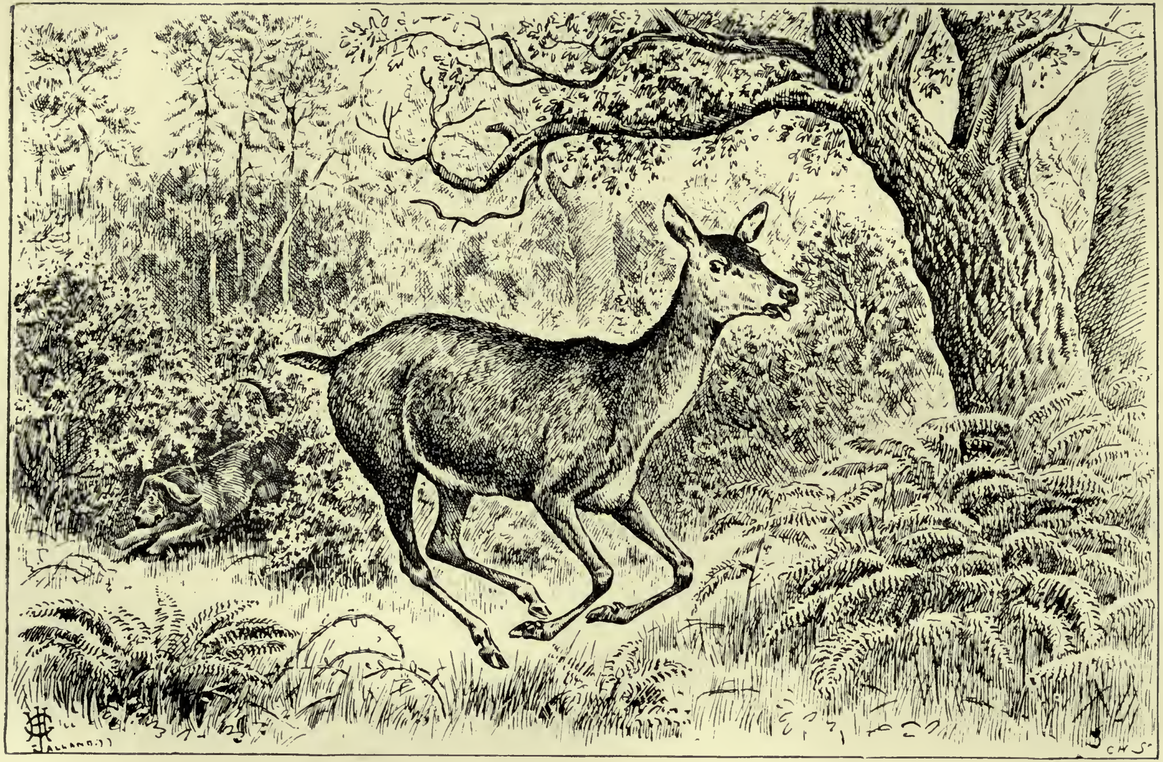
> "To the Memory of a Gazelle brought home from Syria by Captain the Honourable M. F. F. Berkeley, of H.M.S. the *Thunderer*, after the fall of Acre.—She died in December, 1845."

"The warmth of summer's sun may trace
The tend'rest wild-flower here,
May brighten in this lonely place
The night-wept dewy tear.
But Syria's beam cannot relume
Her daughter's lustrous eyes,
Nor reawaken from the tomb
An innocence that dies.
Then, stranger! thus once more I crave
Thy pity to retain;
Thou wilt not injure Zellie's grave,
Nor break her rest again?"

While writing these Memoirs, almost every day adds to the anecdotes of field and forest; and yesterday, the 22nd of August, 1853, my bloodhound, Druid, distinguished himself. He had crossed the line of a wary deer, a buck I was sure, by the slot, who, waiting not to be found, was off when he heard my voice in the distance. We followed this deer for some miles, but he had been gone so long, and the scent was so bad—rain in the air approaching—that Druid and myself alike gave him up, and drew for another. We then came on the fresh slot of a doe in Holmesley enclosure, and in a few moments more I heard an angry yell from Druid, such as he gives when in thick furze he comes on a deer in the lair, and then the roar of his tongue told me that the deer was on foot. I found this doe at two o'clock, run her for some time in and around Holmesley enclosure, and then away back to Wotton enclosure, where we had come on the line of the first deer. For the last two miles, or upwards, Druid had not been able to speak to the scent more than once or so in every twenty minutes, and he only held the line of the deer by keeping to a foot's pace, and questing every twig and fern-top by which the deer passed. It was impossible to assist him; and nothing could be more perfect than the way in which he constantly returned to the last point where he had made her out, and then again recovered the line, from which, for a space, he had deviated. Going thus at a foot's pace, and of course in thickets and fern losing sight of the hound, I often found him behind me, returning to make himself sure, and when on the certain spot, he would give one roar, and then denote the line again with nothing more than a flourish and feather of his sweeping stern. In one place in Wotton the scent freshened, where I had no doubt the deer had waited; but then it died away, and on one of the rides we had a long check. A dozen times or more Druid returned to a spot, but beyond that he could not go on; I suspected the doe had come into the ride, and kept it some distance, and then that some foil had followed her steps, to the detriment of Druid's nose; however, he righted himself at last, and took the line decidedly into another quarter of the cover. On seeing him do this, I ran round to the opposite ride, to give him the meeting; and having posted myself, I heard him fling his tongue, and, my ear told me, coming towards where I stood; there then was a long silence, but at length the angry yell, the booming of his full tongue, and the bound of the roused doe, distinctly reached me, all coming towards where I stood, and in another moment she paused in the bushes, dead beat, and I shot her through the head at four o'clock, when she became as stiff as a hunted fox. My experience in this peculiar method of hunting teaches me that a deer slowly pursued by a bloodhound will do as I have seen hares do in cold scents with harriers; when beaten, their last effort will be a strong one; they will go farther and faster before they lay up than they have gone before; but if that effort is mastered, and they are got up to again, the struggle is over.

The perfection of the shooting at Heron Court is the variety of the game, and the ignorance of the gunner as to what next will rise before him. Lord Malmsbury, I think, killed thirty-six wild-swans in one winter to his own gun; and an eagle and a swan have been shot within twenty-four hours of one another. The stuffed specimens of the rare birds killed there, and which adorn the hall, are unequalled in number, variety, and interest.

Attached to Heron Court are the Stour, Little Stour, and Moors river, where the pike-fishing is excellent; the largest fish I killed with the rod, in March last, weighed twenty-one pounds and a half; and, like all the Stour pike caught in season, was most excellent, when baked, for the table. The best way to dress a pike is to boil it with the scales on; on carving, the scales peel off in large flakes with the skin, under the fish-knife, and, the water being thus kept out of the fish, adds to its firmness and flavour. The tench, sometimes weighing three or four pounds, from these rivers are beautiful, and so are the perch; but in those portions of the Stour where I have fished, the perch seldom exceed a pound in weight. Salmon come a certain distance up the Stour, as well as the Avon; yet, though the rivers approximate so close as to form the same harbour at Christchurch, the salmon will only rise to a fly in the Avon.



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HUNTING DEER WITH BLOODHOUND.

The largest salmon I ever killed in the Avon, if I remember rightly, was from sixteen to eighteen pounds; but Lord Canning hooked one, who broke him, of forty-four pounds. The fish was taken in a net in the same week, with his lordship's fly in his mouth. Lord Malmsbury, Lord Castlereagh, and others have killed many fish in the Avon; and my opinion is, that if the safety and preservation of the salmon could be assured to a greater distance up the river, and Sir George Rose, to whom the fishery belongs, would lower his rent to a considerable figure, the breed of salmon might be increased, and by degrees the rent be raised to even more than it was before. The exorbitant rent at present demanded induces the gentlemen who take the fishery to make the salmon defray a portion of the expenses, consequently, every Saturday before the passage up is opened, all the fish that have refused the fly during the week are caught with a net, not only to pay expenses, but because the neighbour above would catch them with nets the moment they passed to his portion of the river. The salmon killed with a fly are, therefore, very few; and it would be curious to compare the price of each fish so taken with the amount of rent. I think the average price of a salmon would be about ten guineas the rise. Of this all men may rest assured, that no pleasure, except the miser's questionable delight in making money, ever pays its own cost in pounds, shillings, and pence; many pleasures, as the saying goes, do pay, and will repay in enjoyment those who seek them: to have pleasure for nothing is impossible; and it is right that it should be so; if men did not pay for their pleasure, on my word I think some would have none at all.

I was fishing once in the Stour for perch, and my man, who was walking by the brink of the river, clear, swift, cool, deep, and beautiful as it ran just at that place, exclaimed to me, "Sir, here are two great eels." On repairing to the spot, the water without a weed, was gliding rapidly over a firm marl or clay bottom, perhaps from five to six feet in depth, and in the centre of the stream were, not two eels, but two large lampreys, very busily employed, as it seemed to me, in boring a hole in the firm bed of the river. There was no wind, and the sun was cloudless, so that I could see all they did; and as such a sight never chanced to me before, and, perhaps, very seldom to any one, instead of trying to catch the fish, for a time I observed their motions. One fixed its mouth to the clay, and having twisted round and round gimlet fashion, till it had got its mouth filled with a great pellet, then fell back for about a yard down stream and deposited its load, returning to do the same thing again, the other fish taking turn and turn about and conveying the clay to the same spot. Having watched the operation, and made up my mind that they were boring a hole either to live in or to deposit their spawn, I took off my perch hook and put on a set of snap hooks for pike, attaching a bullet to the line about a foot or more from the hooks to sink them. Casting the hooks up stream, to allow for the strength of the current, and far enough to pitch the bullet well beyond the spot where the fish were at work, the instant the bullet, which was visible, was in a line with the fish, I struck with a downward twist of the wrist; the second throw hooked the larger lamprey of the two, and I landed it; the other, not appearing to miss its consort, returned to work as busily as ever, and in three throws more I had the brace. The two weighed something under four pounds. There is very good sport to be had also in Christchurch harbour at low tides, on a still and sunny day, with the flounder spear. I have often leaned idly over the side of my little flat-bottomed boat, a man with the oars simply to stop or steady her, and let her float with the almost slack tide over the mud, while I kept a look-out for the face or else for the slight delineation beneath the surface of the mud of a flounder's form. A steady, quick stab pierces the back of the fish, and a peculiar turn of the wrist to bring the fish up edgeways, and prevent the broad surface he would otherways offer to the water forcing him off the barb, and he is safe in the bottom of the boat. Many a dish of fish I have caught this way, in as idle a manner as the most lazy pleasure-seeker could desire. A good deal of occupation that harbour has afforded me in company with the wild-fowl shooter and—reader, must I say it?—contrabandist, Hooper, as my man, now head keeper over the game at Canford. Before I knew the harbour, its tides and peculiarities, I was obliged to have at my command an experienced hand, and a better-mannered or more sensible wild-fowl shooter or seaman than Hooper never stepped on board a boat. The shooting given me by Sir George Gervis, and the rabbit-warren it contained, on Hengistbury or Christchurch Head (his land forming one side of the harbour), always made it worth my while to be there or thereabouts, so that any adjunct to the day's amusement was kept in sight. There are little ditches intersecting the low land, up which the tide flows, and then leaves almost dry; these are the resort of small but innumerable shrimps, very nearly or about half as large as those obtained in the Severn. These ditches are too small for the use of the common shrimping net, and the mud in them is too deep; but I invented a way of catching them wholesale. This I did with a little drag-net made for the smallest minnows, with a purse to it and a stop. In the narrowest part of the ditches this net was set, and while I watched it Hooper drove the shrimps. The little purse has been so full that it would hold no more, and I have often left it in longer than necessary to watch the crabs who feed on the shrimps come up at this, to them, golden opportunity, and walk off with a shrimp or two tucked up under an arm, their method of carrying them. A great many cormorants at times frequent the harbour and sit in rows on the little islands in the shallows left by the tide; so to amuse myself and catch them, I baited lines of about six feet in length, and tying them to stones, with a small fish on a single hook as for an eel, left them in the water. I never secured a cormorant in this way, but when the tide flowed I had plenty of eels. I think one or two baits were taken by cormorants, and I know that one was. A man and a boy were sitting in a boat (the man was Hooper), at the mouth of the harbour, when the boy cried out suddenly, "Look out! my eye, take care! whatever's this a-coming!" Hooper looked up, and saw a great cormorant half-anchored by a stone not heavy enough to hold him, going up and down in air and water; now mounting high, and now dabbing down, the stone hitting the water with the force of a spent cannon-ball. Luckily the stone came in contact with no man's head, and the cormorant cleared to sea, going straight for the Needles, up and down till lost in the distance. In a small stream inland, I have caught a great many herons in this way, in hard weather, laying the bait, a little eel or the tail only of a larger one, so that it would gently play in the stream on the shallows where the herons came in search of the little trout. In the maw of one heron so caught were seven small trout, a thrush, and a mouse. I once killed a heron with a huge water-rat in his belly, which effectually prevented my bringing herons again to table, though the heron in former days was considered a princely delicacy.

It is altogether useless now to frequent Christchurch or even Poole harbours in winter for fowl, as there are so many gunners that the birds are either scared by popguns, or blazed at by great swivel or shoulder guns and completely driven away.

## CHAPTER XIII

> "He was connected with th' adventurous crew,
> Those whom he judged were sober men and true;
> He found that some, who should the trade prevent,
> Gave it by purchase their encouragement;
> He found that contracts could be made with those
> Who had their pay these dealers to oppose;
> And the good ladies whom at church he saw
> With looks devout, of reverence and awe,
> Could change their feelings as they change their place,
> And, whispering, deal for spicery and lace."—CRABBE.

HOOPER at one time gained his living by wild-fowl and an occasional tub, as well as by the command in summer of gentlemen's yachts. He commanded, and paid, and found Sir Richard Sykes's yacht for some time, little less than a thousand pounds a month passing through his hands; and also a yacht which I hired; and a more zealous, a better captain, or faithful servant could not be. He was a great favourite of Lord Stuart de Rothesay's as well as of mine, and we interceded for him when as honest and good a jack-tar as ever smoked a pipe, named Williams, stationed at the Haven House, caught him coming into the harbour with a tub he had found *by accident*, and for decency sake had covered up with the sail of his boat, and took him, as he was in duty bound to do. Williams, now chief boatman at the Lizard, in Cornwall, heaved a sigh as he pushed off to meet him, for he knew the tub was there, and was friendly with Hooper, and was sorry that it was not a much worse man. The way he knew it was this:—The preventive men suspected that tubs had been sunk off the reef, and were inclined to deem that some few of them might be attached to the lobster pots, and run home with them when the boats returned from fishing. The man on the head with a very good glass therefore kept a sharp look-out; but so did Hooper and his friends with an equally good glass at sea, and there they sat each telescoping the other. Men-of-war's men are not easily done, so the blue-jacket on the look-out, apparently having satisfied himself that they were up to no harm, shut up his glass with a flourish, and, as the men at sea thought, made all safe for a few moments by going off duty. Up came the tub on to a lobster pot, but not in the least safe, for, though the blue-jacket had gone to the Haven House, he left a man hid in the heather with a glass as good as his own, who, from his ambush, watched the whole transaction. The little fleet of boats returned from fishing, the wind was fair, and they set their sails, all but Hooper, who, for the sake of exercise, chose to pull his boat to harbour. Ere the boats got in, down came the ambushed mate,—"What, ho, there!" cried he; "Williams, on the look-out! Stop the boat that's coming in with oars; she's a tub on board." Thus informed, Williams hailed the boat, and did his duty, though, the moment he was so hailed Hooper called out, "Here's a tub I've found for you." Hooper declared that he had found the tub attached to his lobster gear, and that, whatever the other fishermen were doing, or about to do, was nothing to him, but that his intention was to deliver the spirits to the officer in the Haven House. The sail of his boat happening to be over it, and his indulging in the needless but wholesome exercise of rowing, looked odd, and Lord Stuart de Rothesay and myself had some difficulty in obtaining the remission of his sentence, but, by undertaking that he would never risk offending again, Hooper was restored to freedom. This and the failure of wild-fowl made him apply to me to teach him, with my men, the preservation of game. I did so, and from that hour, over a period of many years, Hooper never had but two masters. He lived first near Southampton, as Sir Edward Butler's head keeper; and, when he gave up the manors he rented, Hooper then went, at my recommendation, as head keeper to the late Sir John Guest; he is still at Canford, and I do not believe that a better or more trustworthy man exists. One more anecdote of Hooper, and then to other matters. A lugger having rafted a lot of tubs, and the preventive man on duty for a short space been deemed safe, Hooper and another man were left on the raft; the former, who was a strong swimmer, to carry a guide-line on shore, to which the heavier rope was attached, by which again the raft was to be hauled in. The tubs being unshipped, and thus left afloat, the lugger again stood out to sea. Either the tide had not been exactly counted on, or the distance to the shore was mistaken, for, on Hooper's slipping into the water and making for the land, long before he attained shoal water he found himself "pulled up," as sailors say, "with a round turn," and, like a fish on a hook, tugging away with his teeth to no purpose. In despair, for he knew that the moments he was now losing were worth much, he had nothing left for it but to swim back to the raft, and in five minutes afterwards a preventive man appeared on the cliff, his glass full upon the doomed tubs. How to effect their personal escape was now the object of the smugglers. The sun was up, and a smoothish sea around them, but, fortunately, a few dark scuds occasionally swept the wave. It would be some little time before the preventive boat put off; the signal was up for it and all haste making, and there stood the blue-jacket, glass to eye, watching the men on the raft. Hooper's wits did not desert him even in this strait, and he told his companion, also a strong swimmer, to do just as he did. At intervals they then lay down and concealed themselves among the tubs, and then arose and showed themselves again, each time lying down longer than before, till they had accustomed the preventive eye to lose them, and, after a lapse of time, again to make them out. This they did several times, till at last Hooper gave the word, instead of to lie down again, to slip off into the water and swim in different directions to the shore. The ruse answered. The preventive man, accustomed to miss them among the tubs, took no notice of their disappearance, neglecting to sweep the sea, simply covering the tubs, and expecting their reappearance. When the preventive boat reached the rafts, the men had escaped.

Hooper was one of the gamekeepers whom I called as a witness to contravene Mr. Bright's attempt to get up a case for the abolition of the game laws, and, as a necessary consequence, to substitute in their place a stringent trespass act a thousand times more tyrannical, and possessed of greater power over the liberties of the subject, than the present code. Mr. Bright, as the leader on one side, and myself, as the leader on the other, were obliged each to give three days' notice of the appearance of the respective witnesses, their names and addresses, and, of course, we failed not to be pretty well acquainted with the foregone lives, habits, and characters of every soul that appeared before that committee; at least I know that I so possessed myself of the previous histories of Mr. Bright's friends, and funny ones some of them were; and, if the reader refers to the voluminous publication of the evidence taken before the committee and printed by the House of Commons, it will be seen that, with few exceptions, an indifferent set came up as called by Mr. Bright. When Hooper was before the committee Mr. Bright, in cross-examination, and with his usual acerbity to those whose views oppose his own, endeavoured to cast an imputation on the value of Hooper's evidence on account of his having been a smuggler. Unfortunately for Mr. Bright, one of his own party on that committee, at least one who supported him in many of his opinions, had known Hooper while he lived with Sir Edward Butler as head gamekeeper, and who, as a justice of peace, had seen the manner in which Hooper dealt with and conducted his game cases. When Mr. Bright thus endeavoured to sneer at Hooper's evidence, Mr. Etwell at once rose and gave Hooper the highest possible character. All the taunts of the unforbearing Quaker were borne by Hooper's indignant countenance and iron frame with the contempt which in that case they deserved; but when he heard a gentleman he had supposed to be arrayed against him, unexpectedly rise and refute all unworthy insinuations, and speak to his honesty, respectability, and worth, that happened which neither abuse, blows, wounds, nor the prospect of death by tempest at sea, nor a loaded gun at his head would have produced—the man burst into tears! I never saw greater effect made on a court of inquiry, and Hooper's cross-examination ceased.

There is a man named Read, living near my house now, whom, as a convicted and reclaimed poacher, I called before that committee. He had been a confirmed poacher or game-stealer for forty years, but had never been caught and convicted; always going by the name of Ragged Jack, and, as poachers invariably do, spending the money he got in public-houses. It was not long before my keepers caught him, and he was sent to gaol. In reply to questions from Mr. Bright, this man told the committee, that so far from thinking that the game laws were harsh and useless, he only wished I had come into Hampshire and caught him forty years before, when, if I had, he might have been by this time, comparatively speaking, a gentleman instead of a mole-catcher, so much would it have reformed him and made him respectable. He added that the punishment he had received made him leave off poaching and the public-house, and that now every gentleman was content to see him over park and manors, unwatched by the keepers and free from a suspicion of evil designs. That was, perhaps, one of the longest committees that ever sat, and a keenish encounter of wits was kept up during the time it lasted, Mr. Bright making a sweeping charge against every game preserver in the land, and endeavouring to set landlord and tenant by the ears, with a view to split or weaken the agricultural interest at elections to come; many a tenant farmer donning the character given of the whole class by Mr. Cobden, that of being "as stupid as their own oxen," by not seeing through their arch-enemy of the Manchester school. Mr. Bright knew as well as I did, that if the game laws were abolished, there must have been a most stringent trespass act put in their place, quite as good a game-preserving code, ten times more arbitrary, but infinitely more suitable to lands and villas in the close vicinity of Manchester and other manufacturing places; the owners of which on Sundays, and to some extent on week-days, are much annoyed by trespassers, who, when in pursuit of a sparrow or a blackbird, or simply roaming about with a gun, cannot be made amenable to the laws, because there are neither rabbits nor game to pursue. Unless, therefore, a previous notice had been given not to trespass, or some amount of damage done to fences, trees, or land, no case would exist for an action or more summary conviction. The frustration of that attempt of Mr. Bright's I have ever looked back upon with satisfaction; and though I have lent my best endeavours to remove any unnecessary hardship from the face of the present game laws, such as enacting that persons might keep greyhounds, and hunt with harriers without a game certificate, still I am convinced that the code as it now stands is and would be infinitely preferable to laws which, for the protection of private property, must be made, if it were abolished.

A good many otters at times use the rivers at Heron Court, and on one occasion I brought my hounds to try the Moors river. Lady Pembroke and her daughters, who were staying at Heron Court, came out to see the sport, and for the first time in her life her ladyship was at the death of an otter. None of my field had ever seen an otter found before, and when the word was given by me on the peculiar squall of my old terrier, named Tip, that "the otter was down," everybody, except Lord Malmsbury and myself, looked for a huge thing swimming about on the top of the water. The terrier put the otter down from a holt in the narrow bank that severed the river from a little pond or back-water, which bank the otter was obliged to cross when in the pond, before he could get into the stream. The sons of Admiral Dashwood were standing by, and I saw the chain or bubbles that marked "the otter's murky way" going straight in a line for the feet of a little boy standing on the brink of the pool, now an officer in her Majesty's 36th regiment of foot. I bade him "look sharp!" for as it was the first time that the otter was put down, having shunned the danger at the holt, and not expecting any other, he would rise boldly to the surface. He did rise, within a foot of the little boy, but was so quickly out of sight again, that when asked by me what he had seen, he replied, "a duck." We contrived to keep the otter to the pool till she could stand it no longer, and made an attempt to cross the bank that kept her from the river, a little island, in fact, or nearly so; but my terrier Smike, the best otter-terrier I ever saw, seized and pinned the otter, and they held each other on the island till an old foxhound came to the rescue and finished the matter. Parts of the banks of these rivers are so high as to amount to cliffs in some places, and the banks are so hollowed out by floods, that the otters bid defiance to a pack of hounds, and it is impossible to keep them from their holts long enough to beat them. The otters are, therefore, trapped on every possible occasion, the best trapper being a servant in the employment of Mr. Farr, whose house stands immediately on the bank of the Stour, near Christchurch.

On a very cold snowy morning, the sleet driving before a northerly wind as sharp and hard as powdered glass, the ditches filled with snow, and the roads opposite every gateway or shard in the hedge thwarted by drift, stained by dust from the ploughed lands, I set off to meet Lord Malmsbury at the Queen public-house, at Avon, to shoot wild-fowl on the river of that name. All the little boys that met me on the way had blue cheeks and red noses, and were muffled to the chin with worsted comforters, truants in some cases tarrying from school to slide on the ponds, or, most unnecessarily, on the foot-paths, to the great risk of falls among red-cloaked old women. There was not a sparrow on the cottage thatch, where the chimney's warmth had thawed the snow, that did not seem to have his greatcoat on, so bluffed were the feathers; and not a frozen-out duck who did not glance up at the pendent icicles on the roof, and seem to be putting up a prayer for rain. Farmyards looked comfortable in their deep straw newly flung from the barn-doors; and pigs thatched themselves with it while they rooted beneath for any fallen grain. Cocks and hens sat under the sheds, all windows were closed, the glass frosted by the breath inside; and in all houses containing large families a coughing chorus was kept up by every mother's son and daughter: twins hooped a duet; the father or grandfather, out of work or too ill to go to it, occasionally coughed a bass solo, and not a soul seemed able to speak but the good-wife, who had the care of everybody, and talked for them all! It was a propitious morning for the sport, and my retriever Jessie and myself got out of the little carriage used for purposes of the field, as if we had been sugared for a Christmas present. Horse to the stable, man and dog to the settle. "No! my good hostess," I exclaimed, to Mrs. Carey, "not to the little parlour," which on these occasions had a fire ready lighted for us; "I am all for the well-smoked chimney corner, its settle, and the blazing turf. Now the little round table, a glass of 'dog's nose' (gin and beer with a little sugar and a toast in it, white with froth as if in mockery at the snow), and then I'll be thawed by the time of Lord Malmsbury's arrival." Down we sat, Jessie and I, to enjoy our toast and ale, the two heavy double John Mantons of eleven gauge, their snowed-on covers taken off, in a warm corner.

In came a man. "Mercy on us, good fellow, shut the door;" the very snow wants to work in and warm its pallid face. "Cold morning, sir," was the reply. "Pint o' beer, mum!"—bolted in no time—and off the rustic went, flapping his arms like a windmill. "Dash that door, there's the latch again." But this time it only opened sufficiently to admit a head—a queer-looking black face it had to it, with grizzled wool above, matching the falling sleet on other things: it begged for the still outside body to be permitted to come in for a moment and warm itself. "No," was the hostess's repellant reply, as she bustled up to the door to shut it, at the risk of beheading the trembling requisitionist. "This is no place just now for the like o' you;"—alluding, in all probability, to my presence, and the expected approach of Lord Malmsbury. I saw the repulsed body, head and all, as its owner, a poor Negro, looked in with longing eyes as he crept past the window, with less clothes upon him than I ever saw on anything like a man, saved as assigned in pictorial representations of Adam. A few rags hung about him, but chest, head, and feet were bare, and nipped by the wind and frost to an inflammatory blue and ferruginous brown. Jumping up, I opened the door and called him back: he came with indistinct or confused notions of charity or the cage. "Come in," I said, "my good fellow:" he obeyed me. "Come on," was the next bidding; and then our conversation, kept up as it had been only on one side, terminated by my pointing to the vacant chimney corner by my little table—to the considerable growling of Jessie and astonishment of mine hostess—into that seat the poor Negro mechanically fell. "Now, then, Mrs. Carey, another pot of hot stuff like mine, and some bread and cheese for my guest." It was brought, and I bade him do justice to it. The poor fellow's mute astonishment at this change in his prospects, the reverse so sudden and fortunate, seemed to strike him dumb. I don't think he could speak; but he soon began to rub his hands at the fire, and, to use a very expressive phrase, to pitch into the viands, sipping his hot brew with the most humble but thankful satisfaction, mine hostess waiting on him with all the civility in the world—seeing that I was to pay—and Jessie, in her turn, begging of him a piece of his cheese. God forgive me for many a harsh word I have hastily spoken in my life to a poor man; the food I gave this Negro was no atonement for it on my part, for I do not hesitate to say that I had as much pleasure or more in watching this houseless, lonely, and famished man eating heartily and kindly treated, when most he needed it and least expected it, than I had in the day's wild-fowl shooting that was to come. It cost me but little, indeed I had not much to give; but, reader, believe me when I say the shilling so laid out gave me greater happiness than many a five-pound note spent in other things.

The moment Lord Malmsbury arrived we sallied forth, old John Freeman the keeper in company. Than Freeman, who was the joint gamekeeper of Lord Malmsbury and Mr. Fane, a better servant never existed: it was a difficult service to fill, but he thoroughly understood the nature of it, and gave to his employers every satisfaction. Poor fellow! I little thought when he loaded my second gun this last winter of 1853 it was the last time I should ever receive that service at his hands. He died in the spring of consumption, regretted, not only by his masters, but by every fellow-servant whose opinion was worth having.

It was a severe day of the good old sort, the one I am speaking of, and at the right time of year, seasonable weather, as described by Walter Scott,

> "When snow falls thick at Christmas tide,
> And we can neither hunt nor ride
> A foray on the English side."

A statement had been made that a gentleman on this river had suddenly flushed a lot of baldcoots from their roost upon the ice, every one of whom left its tail, a frozen tuft, behind him; and as quantities of these birds lighted close to the respective "gazes" on the river in which Lord Malmsbury and myself lay concealed, while the keeper was driving the water, it occurred to us to inspect the individuals and see if any of them were so deficient. Out of the two or three hundred coots that ran, walked, slid or sat by us, not more than three or four had tails, so we agreed, on comparing notes, that for the coots to be so denuded was a contingency on hard weather, as well as a proof that the statement we had heard was true. This puts me in mind of a fact furnished me by Mr. Weld of Lulworth Castle. The evening had set in with a south-east wind and drizzling rain or sea-mist, but towards morning, when the moon rose, the wind shifted to the north, the sky cleared, and a very sharp frost supervened. The shepherd attending the sheep in the park arose before six, the frost at its height, and the moon making it light as day; and as he was approaching the fold, his path lay under some high trees, the favourite roost of wood-pigeons. The man's astonishment may be more easily conceived than described when, on his footstep crunching on the frosted leaves and hard ground, he suddenly felt himself under a shower, not of frogs or little fishes, but of good fat wood-pigeons, the birds tumbling on his head and running about his legs incapable of flying. Having an eye to plunder thus cast in his way by Providence, he set about kicking and catching right and left till he had wrung the necks of and collected more birds than he could carry away in a sack. The fact was the feathers of the pigeons, thoroughly wetted by the mist in the early part of the night, particularly the long wing-feathers farthest from the heat of the body, the ends of which when at roost rest upon the tail, had frozen fast in the morning frost, or at least fast enough to prevent an immediate flight. The quists,[1] ignorant of the circumstance, when suddenly frightened by the shepherd, sprung from the boughs on which they sat, but failing in their expected flight, they fell to the ground and were captured. Facts are thus again more strange than fiction, and we need go no further than the truth to find matter for marvel.

Great quantities of plovers breed around Heron Court, as well as snipes. While fishing for pike in the early spring it is curious to hear the male snipe as he flies on high like a swift, trumpeting or bleating over his mate. The noise reaching the fisherman's ear is something between the bleat of the sheep or the lamb and goat, and is made by the wings of the bird in particular darts or dips of his flight. The New Forest resounds with the noise during that season of the year.

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[1] The ringdove is called quist or queesh in the south of England, a survival of the Anglo-Saxon name *cusceote,* whence our "cushat."—Ed.

# CHAPTER XIV

"To thee, both day and night must bring some traces
Of joys or sorrows shared in other places."
"Indeed, dear Doe, thou say'st the words of truth,
All nature is with reminiscence rife,
Scents from the flower's sigh the scenes of youth,
Each distant bell's a chime from early life.
In perfume, as in music, mingled joy and pain,
From the long past awake, and rule the mind again."
*The Last of the New Forest Deer, an unpublished Poem.*
G. F. B.

HAVING obtained the Royal leave to shoot over the New Forest, with the sport at my command over my own beat, coupled with the kindness of my friends, I was at no loss for amusement. The licence over the forest is in writing, and plainly restrictive in certain things; for instance, to shoot the grey-hen or hen-pheasant is strictly prohibited, and the person possessing the licence is given to understand that the Crown expects him to use its gift in moderation, as an occasional recreation, and not to make the royal waste a scene of continuous slaughter, or gain by sale of the game therein killed. I had not long had the licence, or become acquainted with the habits of some of those who possessed it, before I was suspicious as to considerable abuses. In the first place the keepers, with very few exceptions, never took the trouble to ascertain, when they heard a gun, who it was that fired it: this I observed in my own case, for unless I happened to cross a keeper, he never purposely came to see who I was. In the second, I observed that if I took a turf or furze cutter from the vicinity of the forest, as my beater in thick cover or anywhere else, he halloed, "Mark, sir!" to a hen-pheasant or grey-hen as eagerly as to anything else, and looked disappointed as well as astonished, in the first place, at my not firing, and, in the second, on a suggestion that I might be tempted to thrash him if he halloed to the hen-bird again. One day after shooting, I asked one of these fellows if the gentleman, that I knew he usually beat for, was careful as to what he shot; the man grinned and said, "Everything's a cock, sir, as rises." With this quaint assurance I was contented. More recently, on stopping at a woodman's lodge to put up my horse, while I beat the Holmesley enclosure then thrown open, I saw a quantity of game feathers lying on the grass; so I exclaimed to the old man, "What, Bromfield, do you keep cats to kill the game?" "No, sir," he replied, "those feathers be from the gentleman's game-bag what shot here yesterday; he shook his bag there." On this I inspected them closely, and found that, though there were hen and cock pheasant feathers, the majority of the collection were from different grey-hens. I knew this as well as anybody, but not choosing specially to rely on my own judgment, I enclosed some of the grey-hen's feathers to Mr. Cumberbatch, at New Park, with a request that they might be shown to the most experienced keepers in the locality, who would determine for me what feathers they were. The reply to this was, "The feathers from more than one grey-hen, certainly." I then told him where I had found them, and whence they came. In addition to this, I had reason to suppose that some persons, holding the shooting licence under the Crown, were in the habit of killing the game therein without the usual game certificate or tax, to enable them legally to possess the right anywhere; and as in my eyes it was a double offence to hold a gracious permission under her Majesty, and yet to evade the demands of her revenue, I ordered my men to be on the watch; and I resolved myself to show up the first offender that came within my knowledge; in this resolution I was joined by several other gentlemen. A conviction took place, and the person so convicted on that account forfeited his licence; in my opinion most deservedly. I discovered it also to be a system to break dogs to the young black-game in the forest in the month of August, of course to the destruction of a great many from each brood; and this also I represented. Previously to this, his late Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge ruled that no game should be shot in the forest until the first of October, black-game and partridge shooting under the old system having commenced together on the first of September. Instead of the forest streams being retained for those in possession of the royal liberty, they were not only fished by the keepers and woodmen themselves, but by any stranger or gipsy who could hold a rod, set a night line, or dam up the water for the purposes of laving and catching the fish: this neglect, I understand, has also been very properly remedied. Then, as to the deer, and what became of the best bucks! Lord Stuart de Rothesay was a master keeper of the walk nearest me, Holmesley, and in the number of years I rented under him, and dined at his table on the venison his walk occasionally supplied, I never saw a haunch that was from what ought to have been a warrantable deer; and in the longer period, now fourteen years, that I have continued since his lordship's death to rent under Lady Stuart de Rothesay, out of the bucks given to me by the Crown, never less than one a year and sometimes more—out of those deer brought me by the keepers, I never had what could properly be termed a fat buck. Such a name, in fact, had these warrant or rather unwarrantable deer obtained for the forest venison, that when Lord Seymour's Cruelty Act came into force for the "removal," as he tenderly expressed it, of the New Forest deer, and the venison was all to be sold, people turned up their noses at it, and said it was not worth buying even at fourpence per pound. I knew better, from having seen the best bucks that used to go the Lord—I speak not irreligiously, my good readers!—the Lord Duncan only knew and knows where; and when I heard that all the bucks were for sale, I immediately jumped at giving any price they chose to fix on them, provided I might select and kill each buck myself, undertaking to give the highest value set on them for any buck I killed. I thought this but fair to the interests of the Crown, as then if, in mistake, I killed a wrong deer, the smart would fall on me. The first warrant that was given me was one on Hall of Whitley Ridge, and I went over to look at his browse bucks. The browse buck was a deer fed by "lop" round the keeper's house; and having been thus cared for in winter, was usually the fattest. The buck that had got into the enclosures when a fawn, or was bred in the wood by a doe accidentally got in there, was termed an enclosure buck, and was usually the largest and heaviest deer; but the heather buck, who frequented the lawns on the open heath, was, in my opinion, though not the fattest or the largest, still infinitely the best-flavoured venison.

I remember it was a beautiful morning in August, with a nice fresh rustling breeze, when I went to kill my first buck at Whitley Ridge, the train depositing me at Brockenhurst station by eight o'clock in the morning. Joseph Hall, the son of the keeper, attended me, and we kept on the inside of the little enclosures of cultivated land round the lodge to see if the herd of bucks were anywhere within shot. The fence of the enclosure formed a good screen, and besides this, the deer, from often seeing people at work in these fields, did not apprehend any danger from them. We discovered the herd lying down in some rushes between fifty and sixty yards from a rail in the hedge, behind which we had crawled without being observed, and thence had an opportunity of inspecting them. There were the heads and antlers of several good aged bucks, *that* I could see at a glance; but as they were all lying down in rushes, and about and under oak and thorn trees, and in fern, it was impossible for me to judge which was the fattest deer. Joseph Hall had a personal acquaintance with every deer on his father's walk; knew their ages and their condition; and had a name for every one of the bucks; such as Stumpy, for a deer who had lost part of his "single"; The General, for the great buck who usually took the lead, and so on; but as this was my first visit to the walk on that day I was not aware of how good a forester he was. I asked him which was the best buck, and he at once pointed him out lying sideways to me in the rushes, with nothing but his neck, head, and antlers to be seen, nodding away at the flies. A bare buck got up and stood in the way, and then a black pig thrust his snout into danger; but at last every impediment was removed, and the buck's head was fair before me. I told Hall I could hit him, but as his head was always in motion at the flies, he rather wished me to wait till the deer stood up for a shot at his body. However, with a rest on the lower bar of the rail, I felt sure of my shot; so in a pause which the flies permitted I shot the buck, and severed the windpipe close to the great jaw-bones. The deer bounded a few yards and fell dead. A more beautiful buck than this, or a fatter, was never seen; and as Joseph Hall dressed a deer neater than almost any other keeper that ever came within my observation, when the venison came to my larder everybody, tradesmen and gentlemen, begged that I would buy and kill them a buck like it. It is all very well to ask a man to do this in an enclosed park, but in a forest, and under the circumstances of the deer being a good deal shot at, I declined; all I promised them was, if they would buy the venison, to do the best I could. More bucks were then demanded from the Crown than Mr. Cumberbatch could give me warrants for, by which I am perfectly certain that, had the deer in the New Forest been properly cared for in bygone years, and a local resident at New Park conversant with the management of forests and "vert and venerie" placed there as master keeper as well as head woodreeve, there would have been no drain on account of that forest on the finances of the Crown. There would have been none of the enormous roguery which Lord Duncan exposed as to timber and turf-cutting, peat-cutting, furze and rush-cutting, while the grazing of horses and cattle would have been restrained within proper and remunerative bounds. All that Lord Duncan exposed I was aware of; and if Lord Carlisle will refer, if he has not destroyed it, to a correspondence of mine, he will see that I reported the existing state of things to him. Of all the English forests, from the nature of the soil, absence of mineral productions, and scantiness of population, the New Forest was the one that had the best right to have continued as an ornamental appendage to the Crown, and as a site for the young princes to have followed the healthful recreation of hunting and shooting.

It is in the New Forest that the Queen's staghounds should have been kept as foxhounds;[1] and I maintain that such an establishment as the present pack of staghounds is, from the increase of population, railways, etc., out of place at Windsor; and that it is unseemly for the subjects to threaten the Crown servants with actions, and to pelt them with pitchforks, when by chance, as at present, they run over the Harrow country. The people farming the greater portion of the lands over which the Royal Hunt passes now, if they thought it would avail them, would petition for the non-existence of the hounds, while every soul, from the gentleman and farmer down to the poorest cottager resident in that part of Hampshire, would memorialise the Crown to bring the establishment to the New Forest. I speak advisedly, and from observation as well as communication with others; and I believe, though I state it not on authority, that Lord Derby's Government entertained some such idea in regard to the proper site for the Royal Hunt. The New Forest is upwards of sixty thousand acres of wild heath, swamp, and wood. Foxes can be more easily preserved there without detriment to the farmer's hen-roosts than in other places, and hunting may begin earlier and last longer than in more cultivated districts, without damage to growing crops. An establishment such as the Crown foxhounds would be, would have the effect of bringing other establishments and studs into the vicinity, and afford place as well as profit to the labouring people. Local gentlemen who will not hunt now because they think that they could not often appear with the hounds unless they subscribed, which they cannot afford to do, would then keep more horses, more villas or hunting-boxes would be taken, and, in short, a very general lift to the interests of a poor locality would be afforded by the means thus advocated. With all respect for the Crown, I do not hesitate to affirm, that in its distant possessions—I speak of forests far from Windsor Castle —the poor are infinitely more neglected than around the estates and private forests of the nobility and gentry.

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[1] A suggestion well worthy of consideration, even at this time of day.—Ed.

The good and peaceful have no one to reward them, there is no worldly premium to be won by an honest course of life; virtue is to all intents and purposes its sole and own reward; but, on the other hand, vice, theft, and smuggling are in the ascendant on account of gain and apparent impunity. This state of things is all wrong, and, if I may be permitted to say so, not in accordance with the dignity of the Crown; and, therefore, in these distant forests, a master-keeper or local steward, or ranger capable and fit to do the duty should be on the spot to keep order, restrain roguery, and reward the industrious and good. The names of ranger, master-keeper, etc., with the ancient appellation of bow-bearer, forsooth! have been to this day retained without the occupation or care for which that name when instituted was held to be responsible. A man might just as well put a milkmaid in his stable in charge of his stud of hunters, as the men I have heard named in the forest as "master-keepers." It is this neglect, and such neglects as these, that have produced the roguery that I fear has disforested the forest. Poor Itene! (one of the ancient names of the New Forest), on whose beautifully wild undulations of heather Queen Elizabeth, in a journey to Southampton, once "to her Majesty's great delight beheld a thousand head of red deer" brought within view by the keepers, its woods and heaths might have afforded every kind of sport and every head of game to the Royal hounds and gun, not only without detriment to others, but with infinite good to all, if it had been properly and fairly attended to; instead of which it fell into the hands of neglect and knavery, and hence its ruin. Lord Duncan knows, and so do I, where all the best venison went to; but I do not know, and I don't know whether he knows, who gave the order for it to go there, or whether it found its way there, as I suspect, without any other order than that of an inferior clerk. Sure am I that on every walk there were bucks every season to be killed whose condition might vie with that of park deer, and yet no one in the vicinity of the forest entitled to one ever had a haunch fit to be eaten as the venison described in each warrant, from "a fat buck." I speak of fourteen years' experience, and during that time the deer were robbed of every blade of hay supposed to be grown on the lands at New Park, specially enclosed and set apart for their use. I used in my rides to amuse myself with a look at what was thrown down to the deer. The only hay I ever saw given to them was stuff in its stalks resembling walking-sticks, and smelling very much like manure from a farmyard, of as much use to the deer as casting before them a heap of stones. The best of the hay was used *one way or other* at New Park, and the deer were wronged and starved. If the hay that I saw came from New Park, it was the topping up or the bottom rubbish of stacks, the useful part of which had all been sold or applied elsewhere, and in consequence of this, the keepers, to maintain a few bucks at hand, were obliged to browse them by lopping the trees all winter and summer—a thing which never should have been needed nor permitted under proper care of the pasturage. If any old bucks were left, from being thus cheated of their hay, and the winter was hard, cold and wet, they died; and, besides this, not a doe was killed for winter venison. The consequence of this neglect and mismanagement was, that the forest became full of old, worn-out does and young female stock, and the valuable portion of the deer, from whom a revenue might have been raised, were wasted, and what with theft, mal-appropriation, and neglect, the sale of venison contributed not a sixpence to the ways and means. Men, having no property nearer than London, and of course no claim to the rights of common, possessed brood mares in the forest. Half the saddlers' shops in London and elsewhere were, and are now, supplied with hollysticks for whips by people who have no business to cut a twig; and whenever a man living in the purlieus wanted a gate-post or rail, he entered the forest and took it.

# CHAPTER XV

"Oh ! sin it was, grave Mentors say,
The village to despoil ;
To turn the cottager away,
And devastate the soil.
'Tis fair to scoff and blame the deed ;
But apter site for glade
Ne'er spread the turf to greyhound's speed,
Nor shunn'd the plough and spade.
The fine white sand, the stunted heath,
The oak-top withered bough,
The dark red swamp that lies beneath,
The gorse that scarce will grow."
*The Last of the New Forest Deer.*—G. F. B.

My remarks on this splendid forest are all from personal observation ; for when I had no sport in hand I loved to ride and walk in its wilds to look at the deer, and to enjoy its perfect retirement. There was no one, no master man to laud a good and vigilant keeper, nor to discharge or reprove a bad one. The man that went to bed at nine o'clock at night, and rose at eight, leaving timber, deer and game to be stolen by bad characters, characters made bad by the impunity of wrong, received as good wages and as much praise as the keeper who got perhaps a broken head and the certain loss of his night's rest in protecting the Crown property. Joseph Hall, the young man I have before mentioned, offers a very fair illustration of this. He was out one night protecting the forest in company with another young keeper named Toomer, when they came on two notorious deer-stealers and bad characters in possession of a deer. Joseph Hall went at the one who was most notorious, and of whom many of the keepers stood in great dread, a much bigger man than himself, and Toomer pursued the other. Hall was armed with a stick and loaded pistol, and soon came up with his man, who turned round with the barrel of his gun and commenced a furious attack. At it they went, up and down; in the fight Hall was disarmed of his stick, and in the inky darkness under the trees, near the road from Brockenham to Lyndhurst, it flew from his hand he knew not whither. His head was then laid open in several places, and he could scarcely see for blood; he had been kicked too in the body most severely, and the murderous attack of his assailant still continued. Had Hall fired he would have been fully justified, for it would have been in defence of his life; but the brave fellow abstained, and closing with his man he used the pistol only as a weapon to strike with, and with it he fractured the deer-stealer's under-jaw, knocked out a number of his teeth, and got him down. The man then surrendered, praying Hall not to strike him any more. Hall knelt on him, and as he had surrendered, refrained from further punishment, when, at that moment, the returning footsteps of Toomer were heard, who had received a blow on his head, which he said had stunned him, but without a prisoner, the other fellow having escaped; and when Hall's surrendered antagonist heard the footsteps, he took them for those of his companion, and calling out to him to hasten to his assistance "to kill Hall," he suddenly freed himself from the nearly fainting antagonist who had hold of him, and assaulted him as savagely as before, but luckily in vain. Hall knocked him down again, and, angry at this recommencement of hostilities after he had surrendered, was administering to the villain some severe punishment when Toomer and a brother of Hall's came up and begged him to desist. The deer-stealer was sent to the hulks, but what reward had Joseph Hall? *None;* and though he was six weeks in the doctor's care, and for a year or more spit blood from the kicks he received, and, in short, very nearly lost his life in doing his duty, *he was left to defray the medical expenses he had incurred.* There are keepers in that forest who shunned a conflict with this deer-stealer, and also with another from whom this young man took a murderous weapon; and yet these men are as well paid, and are as much in favour, as the gallant young Hall. Under such circumstances as these, how is it to be expected that keepers or woodmen will do their duty?

There is not a keeper in the New Forest, that I am aware of, who systematically destroys the lesser vermin—the forest is a nursery for all sorts of vermin—which, having destroyed the greater part of the forest game, then infest the neighbouring manors of gentlemen to a most objectionable and destructive extent. I asked a keeper once why he did not destroy the vermin, and he replied, "Nothing was allowed for doing so." I then inquired, "What are your wages, your house, and your land for?" This was a puzzling question, but he met it by saying, "No powder and shot was allowed, and no traps." The number of vermin of all sorts bred every year in the New Forest is enough to stock all England; and in common fairness to neighbouring proprietors, this nuisance should not be permitted on the Crown lands. In France the forest-keepers keep a regular list of all the vermin they kill, which, I believe, is printed, and the same attention to so necessary a destruction should be paid here, and each keeper made to nail up the head of every vermin as a proof of his attention to duty. Why should not the New Forest have been retained by the Crown as a place for the stalking of red and fallow deer, within two hours' reach or nearly so of Buckingham Palace; that, in conjunction with its black-game, pheasants, hares, rabbits, woodcocks, snipes, and wild-fowl of every sort, with its scanty capabilities for useful cultivation, surely ought to have saved it from the present Act of Parliament: an Act, in its working so unpopular, that all the gorse in the forest of any growth has been obliged to be cut to prevent the poorer classes from a general incendiarism, in the event of a dry season. Before the gorse was cut, I have, at night, seen from my windows three incendiary fires raging at one time; and, on one occasion, forty acres of Crown oak timber were consumed. In addition to this, the respectable portion of the inhabitants of Burley dared not go to bed at night while that dry weather lasted, if the wind set from the forest gorse to their habitations, for fear of the conflagration reaching them while they were not up to put it out. My ears are filled by the complaints of the poor as to the hardships of the present system; and their lamentations of the loss of their milch cows—no little loss, I can assure the reader, to a large and youthful family. Formerly the milch cows "in use" were permitted to run from the cottages in the forest, while they were in milk; now no distinction is made, and all cattle must be "up" on a given day. I think it was Mr. Sturges Bourne who granted the yearly run of cows in milk. It is all very well to say to a cottager he must take up his cow, but where or how can he afford to keep her if the run in the forest is refused? It may be, and certainly is, a valuable right to the poor, and an expensive one to purchase from those in possession of it in the event of a general enclosure; and, therefore, if the Crown can prove, as I believe it can, that the poor have not the run of the milch cow vested in them, if an enclosure be contemplated, it is an economy to stop it; but I fearlessly say, that it is not an economy graceful to the Crown, or such as a high-minded Minister would have advised.

Now, by way of experiment, let me suppose another plan had been adopted, and draw a picture of the New Forest in the early part of June, as I could wish it had been kept, and to which, if this Act is not found to work well, it could yet be returned. Look at that cottage! no doubt it is an encroachment arising from a "rolling fence" and the neglect of the forest officials, but the time has passed for any reclaim on the part of the Crown, and honest, hard-working people, with their family, live in it. Surrounded by heather, look at their row of beehives, and what beautiful honey they make! The forest greensward runs up to their little garden, and, down in a swamp below, there are a couple of pigs rooting for a living, while, grazing close by, in full use, is a Jersey-bred or an Alderney cow. The head woodreeve passes, and seeing the good-wife at the door addresses her thus:—"Well, mistress, your husband pleases me very well, now, and has entirely left off his idle habits; the keepers say they can trust him all over their walks, and that he neither steals wood, deer, nor game. He brought me a little leveret this morning that he had found when he was at work, in a place where he thought it was not safe, so there is half-a-crown for you, and you will all have your dinner at Christmas if your husband continues to conduct himself properly." "Thank you, sir," replies the smiling dame; "I'm very glad he wishes to oblige your honour; I'm sure it's better for me and the children, as he never keeps out at night drinking now." With a low curtsey she receives the half-crown, which was two shillings more than her husband could have got for the leveret, had he behaved dishonestly and sold it. The ranger is turning on his way, when the woman asks him to step into her little garden; he does so, and she says, "Please, sir, will you see what the deer have done to our garden-stuff? there is a doe or two that jumps the fence and comes here at night." He inspects the damage, and sees, not only that the garden is properly fenced for a cottage, but also where the deer have jumped over, and that they have not been let in on purpose or by neglect. "Well," the ranger says, "you know the old forest law is abolished, and now every man has a right to kill and take a deer on his own land for his own use; therefore, your husband can protect himself." "Yes, sir, we know it," rejoined the woman; "but we would not think of hurting the deer for fear of displeasing your honour." "Thanks, my good woman; then, if it is the same to you, I will order the keeper of the walk to lend you a deer-trap, which your husband can look to, and, when the deer is caught, you shall either eat her, or I will buy her of you, whichever you like."

The ranger said this because he would not give an excuse for the dangerous possession of a gun or trap to a man but just reclaimed from evil habits. What a beautiful scene the forest was then! its magnificent gorse replete in its auriferous hues, the sweet bog myrtle or golden willow blushing in its rich ferruginous buds, and the otherwise silent wild, rife with the mellowed chant of birds. The turtle-dove, the wood-pigeon, and the black-cock were murmuring their loves; while the stately pheasant, giving his gleaming plumage to the sun, crowed in reply to others of his kind, to dare a distant male to approach his walk.

What graceful faces peeped from out the gorse! There were the does in their sleek dappled summer coats, selecting the most retired places whereon to "fall" their fawns; while on the more open lawns fed the bucks, their horns just up beneath the velvet. And hark, the snipes as they wheel through the air, like swifts upon the wing, make a curious bleating noise; their females are beneath, either with a late nest, their first nest having been destroyed by some vermin that had escaped the keeper's vigilance, or brooding over their funny-looking, prettily-striped, and long-billed young ones. Ah, what! is that a wounded bird that has flown up from the low bushes beneath yon woodman's feet, and fluttering for the space of twenty yards, seems able to fly no farther, but lighting on a bare spot full in sight, sits with extended wings, and shaking them as if in pain? That is a woodcock endeavouring to lead the intruder either from its nest or young ones. No; it can't be that, there is another bird just like it with its prey in its claws; it has risen and carried the bird it was eating some distance farther on. That is no bird-of-prey, but the mate of the first woodcock, and being with her young, and tending one of them in an exposed situation, she has carried it to a place of safety. On looking at the formation of a woodcock's feet, people would think this was impossible; but it is nevertheless a fact, and, by holding their heels pressed on either side of the young bird, their long toes thus extended downwards, a purchase beneath its wings and breast is obtained, and they carry the burden easily, though hanging lower than a hawk permits his prey to hang when carrying it in his talons. From observations I have made, I feel convinced that the woodcocks carry their young to the swamps and feeding-places from the dry spots in the woods, where they are invariably bred. If they did not do so, they in their earlier hours could not reach the places wherein their food by suction lies; of that I am fully convinced. I never knew the young in number to exceed four, and when the young are so carried from place to place, and put down at a given spot, I think one old bird always remains with the first that is so transported to see—the site being strange—that it does not stray away.

What an idle dream this is of mine, as to the forest in the Royal state! Away with every gentle thought, and in the month of July let us take a real glance at the condition of the New Forest under the "New Forest Deer Removal Bill," a beautifully worded clap-trap beneath which to perpetrate the destruction of the innocent deer, and the most cruel hardships on the country people. Against this measure I presented while in my place in Parliament many memorials to the Crown signed by magistrates, clergymen, farmers, and the labouring poor, praying that the deer might be permitted to remain. The forest laws regarding the deer governed the pasturage of other cattle, the time they were to be turned out and taken in; the rights of the deer also directed the method of turf-cutting, rushes, etc. As a general law, the poor in the vicinity could only take what they could get as to wood, "by hook or by crook;" they were allowed to *cut* no wood, whence has arisen the now common adage. Deer are very delicate feeders, and though the cattle, even under certain restrictions, used to eat them out of their sweet grass on the lawns, the deer did no harm to the coarser grazing of the cattle, for they would rather starve than eat the rougher herbage on which the cattle feed. I said a good deal of this in the House of Commons in defence of the deer and of the poor, but my good friend Mr. Hume for once deserted the public cause, and he, with a host of others, sided against me. I remember his dwelling much on the "dangerous power the Crown had, in these civilised days, to turn out and keep to an unlimited extent, so as to eat up all the pasturage from cattle, not only any amount of deer, but absolutely all and every *wild beast* of chase." "Conceive," he added, "wild beasts! even wild beasts in this country." These, if not the exact words, were precisely the burdens of my friend's song; he having evidently got the idea into his head, that her Majesty and the Prince Consort could, if they pleased at any time so to divert the young princes, and give them such manly recreation, enlarge the contents of the menageries at the Tower—lions, tigers, leopards, wolves, hyænas, elephants, and rhinoceroses—among the liege subjects of the New Forest; and turn it, in fact, into a private zoological or bear garden. All I could say or do was of no use, and the bill passed. Now let us see in what way the poor have been benefited, or who it is that has gone to the wall. I will take my reader a walk in the forest in July 1853. It had been my intention to have published a poem, entitled "The Last of the New Forest Deer," and in that poem there should have been enough of the romantic to have satisfied the fairest bosom full of sighs, and to have excluded the book from any boarding-school presided over by ordinary or unfavoured females, in whose hearts, because unasked for, had grown up the most savage virtue. This poem was nearly finished, but on offering it for sale, I found that my good and former friends, Longman, Colburn, and Bentley, very much against their generous inclination, I am sure, thought of "the devil's walk at break of day," and pluming themselves "like cormorants," were resolved "to sit hard by the tree of knowledge;" and they told me "poetry was a drug in the present market." In short, I found that with all the advantages boasted by the present enlightened age, the taste for poetry was gone, unless it savoured of hymns, or the to my mind impious rhymings of Mr. Goodfellow, in his terrible attempt to portray the Saviour's childhood, called the "Golden Legend." There are some few things which tell better in poetry than prose, and as I am resolved to cling to my old attachment to the Muses, not because there are nine, as I hear some vindictive creature say, but because I love them better than anything else, and have a veneration for Byron and Moore, as well as a living attachment for the last, though not the least, of the poets, for the "King Arthur" of my friend Bulwer Lytton; though my publisher shakes his head, I am resolved, I say, to escape from prose, and tell one little incident in verse, abstracted from the poem on the New Forest shelved for want of a purchaser. The incident happened to me while deer-stalking in the New Forest precisely as I relate it.

"A buck!—I hear his idle horn
Strike the dead gorse or stunted thorn;
Unscared by fear of me away,
  But nodding idly at the flies
  That vex'd his antlers or his eyes,
Or in feign'd fight at play.
The brake is pass'd and shallow pond,
  To where strong ferns uprear;
Ascending thence the rise beyond,
  The horns again I hear.
We neighbour close: I steal profound,
Prone on my breast upon the ground,
  To where a high ridge ends.
Oh, what a scene the parted fern
Gave me the power to discern,
  For toil to make amends!
An amphitheatre was made
  By close-surrounding hill;
While creeping softly through the glade
  There glanced a lucid rill,
Cooling a carpet green, so sweet,
It seemed assigned to fairy feet!
Old oaks withheld their stems away,
  Too heavy for the site,
But stretch'd their broad arms to the day,
  And cast a shadow light
Around the lawn; yet still the sun
Found intervals to dance upon,
  And make the whole scene bright.
Within this wild and lovely glen
  Lay stretch'd a herd of deer;
The does might number nine or ten;
  A sleek fawn lying near.

Some noble bucks at gaze stood by,
  While two or three lay down;
And in the midst of them I spy
  A deer to call my own!
His head away, his haunch to me,
  No portion to the rifle free.
What sound is that? a low, lone cry,
  In plaint and pathos meek,
O'er this sweet scene seems floating by;
It nears the lawn, and comes more nigh,
  And nearer seems more weak:
'Mah!' 'Mi!' the little voice it says;
It is a fawn, and hither strays;
  It stands upon the green:
Oh, what a wasted thing of hair!
It slender limbs will scarcely bear
  The summer breath, I ween.
The fawn that look'd so sleek and kind
  Would not with mother stay,
But, bounding to its tiny friend,
  It sought a game at play:
But, at a touch, upon the grass
  The famish'd one it lies;
And tears of hunger fill, alas!
  Its full and fading eyes,—
The sleek fawn seeming almost sad,
  Or else of wonder full,
At what could make its friend so bad,
  So weak, so lone, and dull;
Unheeding, though, it did not stay,
And, feeling nothing, frisked away.
The wretched starv'd one raised its neck,—
  A poor and lonely form,
That mother's kisses used to deck,
  Ere she had come to harm,—
And rising thus, it sought each doe:
  No teeming udder meets
The little face so full of woe;
  No parent-fondness greets.
Butted, rebuffed, in cold despair,
It shivers in a corner near.
The felon who had caused its loss,
  In reeking beershop roars away;

Though retribution yet shall cross
  His path upon a future day,
  And drag him to the gaol away.
And now the sufferer seeks the rill,—
A liquid instinct moves it still,—
  It tastes, but scarcely dares to drink;
  The cold has made the pulses shrink;
It falls—it drowns—I hear its cry,
And will not leave it thus to die.
  Then let the fat buck bound away!
  I save a little fawn to-day."

Small thought had I, when writing the foregoing lines, that a day would come when hundreds of these innocent creatures would be reduced to this state and left to die of starvation through an Act of Parliament; and that, instead of taking seasonable time to exterminate the deer summer and winter, open day and "fence month" would be made alike available for their hasty destruction. However, reader, I have shown you the forest in June in its happier hour: now look at it in the summer of 1853. We will pass the cottage before described. A cross and haggard-looking woman sits at the door amidst a squalid lot of squalling children: there is neither cow nor pig near the house: for, though it is now one of the months when the forest pasturage is open, the recent law would not permit the milch cow to have its run all the year round, so, at a time when it was worth little in the market, the owners were forced to sell it. The cottage fence was broken down, weeds had grown up in the place of vegetables and the few flowers, and even the beehives had perished or fallen into decay. Let us stop, and ask this woman a question.

"Dame, where is your husband?"

"Alas! sir, he is in prison."

"What for?"

"Why, sir, it's a long tale, and a sad one for me. We have a large family to maintain, and when provisions, at one time, got so cheap, and farm produce and wheat was so low, wages fell likewise; so that we were not a bit better off than when we had more wages, and things were dearer. Worse off, indeed, we were; for the other tradesmen, of whom we had to purchase necessaries, did not reduce their charges according to provisions and wages. However, we struggled through this; for in those days the deer were in the forest, and we had our milch cow, pigs, and plenty of turf. When the new law passed, the run of our milch cow was taken away, and, it not being in our power to keep her up a part of the year, she was forced to be sold for little or nothing. It was hard, indeed, sir, for my poor husband to bear up against it all. To hear them, as called themselves free-traders, say it was wrong to keep the deer to eat up the pasture, but that the pasture should be for the good of us all! Good of us all, indeed! the moment the free-trade party altered the law, and destroyed the deer, then there was no pasturage at all for half the year for our milch cow, nor for nothing else, and the forest laws as to turf and other things were made more restrictive to the poor than ever. Well, sir, my husband could not bear to see our altered condition; the milk of our cow was like taking a little fortune from us: so, one day, in a fit of anger, he set fire to the furze, and was detected and sent to prison."

The tale told by this poor woman was not a singular one; there were many of the cottagers on the New Forest similarly reduced in circumstances: and if we stand on yonder rising ground, we shall see the very face of nature changed. The scene, as far as the eye could reach, though in summer, offers little more than a barren desert. On one hand were the bleached stumps of furze and trees that had been widely consumed by the act of nocturnal incendiaries, while, on the other, all the gorse that had escaped the various conflagrations had been cut, of whatever age it might be if old enough to be set fire to, by the order of the Commission now at the head of affairs. Instead of the rich green forest that used to mantle in gold in May and June in its ferns and broom, a barren expanse was everywhere to be seen, and not a deer nor a bird about it:—

> "Far as the eye could reach no tree was seen;
> Earth, clad in russet, scorn'd the lively green:
> No bird, except as bird of passage, flew;
> No bee was heard to hum, no dove to coo;
> No stream, as amber smooth, as amber clear,
> Was seen to glide, or heard to murmur here."

And now, reader, let us ask to what good end all this devastation and destruction of animal life leads, and what advantages are likely to be attained; certainly no advantages for the poor, that we may be quite sure of. I never knew an extensive measure of landed improvement, as the saying goes, but the poor always went to the wall. In the first place, with the value of common-rights owned by the local public, the forest never could remunerate the Crown for the trouble and cost of an enclosure.

The oak that grows on much of the New Forest now is not fit for shipbuilding, and the stag-headed nature of the dwarf trees that ornament the low-lands proves that there is not a depth of clay sufficient to nourish such a tap root as would bring an oak to perfection. Draining will do much for copsewood, but all the draining in the world will not remove a subsoil of shingle or sand, or change a rock to clay. In the new plantation lately made near Brockenhurst, stand, or stood, several dwarf and stag-headed oak trees, as warnings to the planter; and, at the same time, frowning over his attempt to wood the lawns, are the high trees on the hills, planted there by our forefathers; and throughout the forest it will be seen that on the hills the best timber flourishes. I do not mean to say that there are not some flats the nature of the soil in which will produce a good oak-tree; but I speak generally, and am fully convinced that the hills are the places for enclosures. Well, then, on such a soil as the New Forest is chiefly made of, can it pay the Crown, in the face of the present importation of foreign timber, to enclose and plant, —bearing in mind that, to keep forest-cattle and ponies out of the enclosure, a fence must be maintained nearly as expensive as that which used to keep out the deer? I am sure that the

Crown will lose by any such attempt. By greater economy of labour, and by stopping entirely the system of peculation and robbery hitherto carried on, a better face may be put on the returns; but nothing near so good a one as might have been achieved by judicious management under former circumstances. We will say that, by planting, the Crown will get rid of some of the common-right (I take that to be an idea that is in the mind of the Commission); also that, by the refusal to admit the run of milch cows, they starve out the poor, and get rid, in the event of a general enclosure, of the demand made in lieu of their kine: still I maintain that the forest soil, by planting or by cultivation—well done by, as the plantations are under Mr. Cumberbatch—acknowledging as little common-right as possible, can never be made to return any remuneration for the immense amount of labour which will be exhausted upon it. As to the sporting prospects in black-game and pheasant, the newly-cut drains, and their extent in the new enclosures, will do more to diminish the number of those birds than the Act postponing all shooting till the first of October achieved in their favour. The old hen-bird with her brood hops easily across one of these ditches; but her recently hatched young, in endeavouring to follow her, invariably, from the width and steepness of the sides of the drain, fall in, when they either perish on the spot or are carried off by the run of water. Some foolish persons, called forest-keepers, exclaim, "What good will these great enclosures do to the black-game?" but, as they are men who look no more into the bottom of a drain than they do into any other place where they might "pad" a vermin or catch a thief, their opinion may go for what it is worth. The forest with its deer was a happy and contented land *once*, and might have been made still more so in the way I have pointed out. It is now a sad, a discontented, and a complaining waste, not much of a nursery for timber, but a wide field for the nurture of crime and incendiarism, produced by the Act of Parliament brought in by Lord Seymour and the Whigs. I do not stir a step in the forest without hearing complaints from man and woman as to the restrictions of the new law, and one of their exclamations is, "What have we got by the utter destruction of the deer, and why, if they are so killed, are we not to enjoy the pasturage vacated by them? Instead of getting more in fuel and pasturage we now have less, though there are no deer to eat it." If the feeling remains in the forest such as it is, instead of reducing the woodmen and keepers, if the plantations are to be kept from fire, the staff of watchers must not only be amended by the introduction of more active men, but the Crown will have yearly to expend a heavy sum of money in keeping down the gorse and preventing its being accessible to fire, or the plantations will not be saved. I am intimately acquainted with the people I speak of, by moonlight in their boats on the October and November as well as the calmer summer sea, in the mackerel as well as the herring season. The New Forest men, the same who used to "run the tubs"[1] and to resist their capture, will talk to me and make me acquainted with the general feeling. They know I give them peaceful advice, and they are aware that I do my best to uphold each law, and that in any personal strife I am or have been a match for any of them, always, on the other hand, to the best of the little means I have, rewarding those who please me with a constrained though a liberally intending purse; and these facts united put us on a very good footing. There is always something better than tea to drink when I join in any sport, and they are very glad when I come among them. I am not injured by their society, and I hope that I have served, placed, and promoted many a good man who might otherwise have been lost. One of these men, not much more than a year ago, had made a little money—start not, reader, when I say that he is sternly regarded by the coast-guard,—and he took a farm near my house. The first act of possession was, unasked, to offer me the exclusive right to kill or preserve any game there might be on it, which I accepted. If my hybrids, the birds between bantam and pheasant, stray away, as they are apt to do, they are always safe in the hands of men indigenous to the soil, and are brought back without injury to a feather. I cannot say so much for a man who, I believe, was once a tallow-chandler at Bath, one of Mr. Ross's importations by way of a tenant under Lady Stuart de Rothesay, who sows seeds on—I cannot say cultivates—a farm. The fawn I reared from the forest was this year a graceful doe; she would come to my call, feed out of my hand, and was the most graceful and innocent pet imaginable. Unfortunately she formed an attachment to an old Iceland pony, not much bigger than herself, brought over by the late Lord Stuart de Rothesay, and to this pony she paid a daily visit. This led her occasionally down to the land rented by the tallow-chandler I speak of, who immediately loaded a gun for her destruction. The instant he did so one of his labourers came privately to tell me that my pet was in danger; so, having nothing left for it, as I had previously reported the deaths of favourite animals without redress, I confined her, in the hope of inducing her to bear a chain and collar. In vain: every wild forest feeling seemed to be awakened at such thraldom, and, when I shut her up in a barn, she became sad and suspicious, pining for the sweet grass on the cliff and all her pretty playmates. I could not bear to see her pine; so, an application being made to me for a tame deer for a lady, by Herring, of the menagerie in the New Road, near Fitzroy Square, I reluctantly made a crate in which she could travel by train to London, and, with tears in my eyes, saw her depart for the station in a cart, eating the last mouthful of green grass that Rosie will ever have from my hand. Had I let her loose, and the tallow-chandler had killed her, I should have risked the commission of what would really have been a justifiable homicide; so it was best to let her go. May the lady, whoever she is, be a kind mistress; for in a few weeks more *she* will possess "the last of the New Forest deer."

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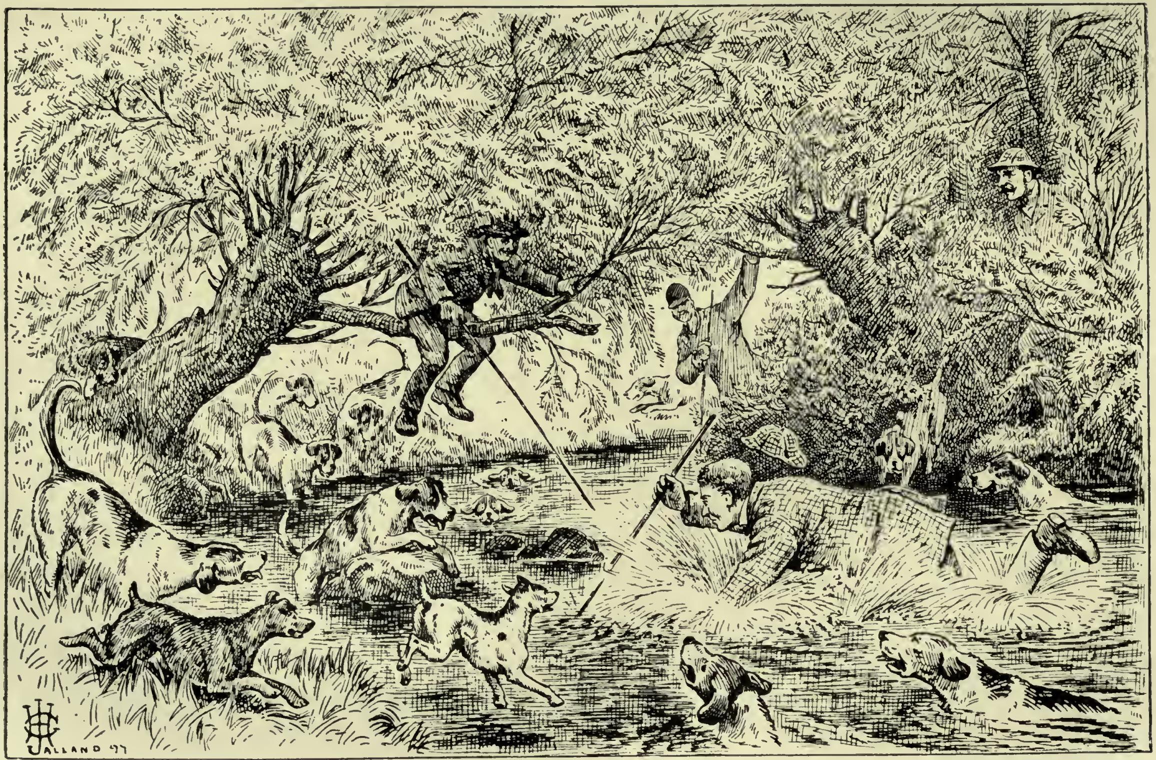
[1] Smuggle liquor.—Ed.

# CHAPTER XVI

"I sat me down on the centre hill,
Where the four rides make a star;
A buck brows'd there I wish'd to kill
Ere the season wan'd too far.
Frisk'd forth the rabbit to the sward;
But he stamp'd at a fox in cover;
The fox stole out, and star'd me hard
Ere he sprung on the drain bank-over;
Through the thick thorns he took his way,
Mark'd for a space by the screaming jay,
Her top-knot rais'd at the prowling ghost,
As she view'd him from her fir-tree roost."
*The Last of the New Forest Deer.*—G. F. B.

Turning from sadder things, the reader shall now have some account of my sport in the forest. My first act after receiving the forest licence to shoot, was to ask the several rangers—Mr. Sturges Bourne and the Duke of Cambridge—if I might hunt the otter and course hares in the forest. Having received permission from each in succession, I resolved to have a touch at the otters, and I wrote to my old servant, George Carter, then with the Duke of Grafton, for any old worn-out and steady hounds. He sent me some, and wrote to say that my old favourite foxhound Harrogate, if I liked it, should accompany them, as he had no longer any use to put him to. Harrogate and I had not met for years, but the meeting at Beacon was just as joyful as if we had been severed but for a day. His joy affected the other hounds who came with him, who, seeing him so delighted, at once fawned upon me, and came bounding to me directly. Just the same was his remembrance of Mrs. Berkeley, though it was some years longer since he had seen her; and he even knew the sight of the little basin in which in former days she used to sop his bread when he came round to the drawing-room window at Harrold. The first day I went out with the three couples of old foxhounds, and three or four of my white terriers, luckily I obtained a live otter just caught by Mr. Farr's man before alluded to, and put him fresh from the river into a little stream in Holmesley Walk, by which there is a considerable pond, and then drew for him. The hounds entered at once, and soon killed the otter, for, of all bag animals, an otter in that way affords less sport than any other. The next day that I went out saw me on the stream near Lyndhurst, that runs not far from Dinney Ridge. It was a beautiful summer's day, and, supposing no otter to have been on the water, the scene was worth walking through, were it but for its wildness and beauty. Deep beds of the golden willow or bog myrtle in places flanked the stream, tangled with the peculiar grasses of the bogs, and occasionally in the drier places matted with brambles and the shoots of the alder. We were near what was once a decoy for fowl, but now grown up into cover, and giving the hounds the wind I was stepping from hag to hag in a myrtle bog, curiously examining the banks of the stream, and coaxing the old foxhounds to forsake a wider draw in drier places for a fox, and to hang on the river with me. They had begun to do this, and were evidently thinking that I was in search of some drain where a fox was gone to ground, for they leant over the sides of the stream, and tried the hollow roots, as they saw me do, when all at once old Harrogate fixed my attention. He was about ten yards in front of me, and rather more than that space I think from the river, when all at once he winded up in the air, raising himself on his hinder-legs, amid the tangled cover, sprung a yard or two nearer, over all impediments, and again did the same. His countenance wore a doubtful but an excited expression, and I knew at once he had found some vermin. I called softly to those near me "to make in on a shallow above and below, for that we were about to find, or I was much mistaken," and in an undertone to Harrogate I cheerfully cried, "You do't, old boy." Each jump with a flourishing stern brought him nearer, till at last he paused on the river's brink, directing his glance and his nose to an old root under the dark alders on the opposite side. He stood an instant and then sprang in and swam across to the holt, his bristles up, his stern waving from side to side, and with a peculiar fling of his head giving promise of his well-remembered tongue. It needed but the cheer from me, and the old hound spoke, seizing and tearing the root above him with his teeth. In an instant hounds and terriers were "together," and all in full cry, rending the root and earth around the holt as if they were mad. The instant Harrogate touched the root, I cried, "An otter down!" and then the fun began. The shallow above first resounded with the "Talliho! look back," the hounds and terriers raged on either side the river, and the former made short casts to assure themselves he had not gone away. Pickaxe and spade now thundered over the holts, and men were manning the alder and willow boughs where one would bear them that lay upon the stream, while others got into the water, and struck with their spear at every wave or bubble that came by them. One of them, and one of the most excited, as well as the first in the water, was my cousin, the present Lord Albemarle. He struck at the passing otter, and broke his spear on the gravelly bed of the stream. Now the lower shallow re-echoed with similar cries to the one above, and then some tenant of a slippery bough would see the otter beneath his foot, and, forgetting that there would not be much to bring him up if he unbalanced himself, strike impetuously, and, hitting nothing, fall headlong in, as if he meant to catch the otter in his mouth, amidst a cheer from me of "Well done, old boy; but try again!" After this had continued some time, the hounds and terriers putting the otter down whenever he rose to vent, a terrible row was heard on the lower shallow, for some countryman with a stick had hit the otter in view of



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“Well done, old boy; try again!”

one of the hounds, and together they killed him. Having harangued the country people, and told them, if any one ever struck an otter again that I was hunting, I would undoubtedly strike the offender, we called a council as to which way we should draw. Among those around me was the old keeper Primmer, in care of that walk, who had been a keeper at Berkeley Castle under my father; Mr. George St. Barbe of Lymington, Colonel Keppel, Mr. Stone, and many more, when the late Colonel Thornhill, who was also there, came up and said he wished I would return to the spot where we had killed the otter, for that Smike, my terrier, afterwards so famous in otter-hunting, would not leave a holt that had not been dug. I took the hounds to the place. They backed the terrier with their tongues, "An otter down!" and the fun began again. It was a beautiful place to hunt an otter in, and to enter a pack new to the game they were hunting; and the shallows being again stopped to prevent access to more difficult water, and sticks forbidden, the cry kept up for an hour. Every holt was dug down to the water's edge, so that the otter must swim or dive, till at last, on finding a portion of the bank unoccupied by a foe, the second otter fairly broke water, and set his head over the heather, I suppose, for some old drain or earth that he knew of. I heard the halloo of "Gone away!" and made to the spot, with a touch of my horn; and it was good to see how the old hounds became young again, with such a scent to serve them. They put their sterns down and their heads up, and yelled as if in anger that they could not go faster. Short work they made of it; for before the hounds had gone many hundred yards they came from scent to view, and tumbled the otter over.

In the course of my otter-hunting in the New Forest, extending over thirteen years, I have found but nine otters; out of these I killed seven, including two killed by me in the stream at Wareham. On the Wareham day, I had drawn the stream up to my friend Mr. Ratcliffe's, and at the close of our first day, just at dusk, I have no sort of doubt but that I found the otters on an island. We began to assail their holts with spade and axe; but, it being so late, had to give it up. The next morning Mr. Radcliffe informed me that his man had tracked three otters, side by side, over some mud, going up stream in the direction of my draw of the day, asserting that no seal of the otter had been there impressed before. I thought this news too good: one otter would have done; but my host declared he could trust to the truth of the report, and we sallied forth in joyful expectation. I was drawing a sort of back-water adjoining a cover, and, observing both hounds and terriers very busy, I gave the word "to look out, for we were about to find." I had sent on my groom, Thomas Newman, to a shallow some distance off to watch it, when, having hardly said that we were about to find, I heard the most extraordinary noise proceeding from my groom and his vicinity that could be imagined. The cause of it I give in his own words. He said "he heard me call out that we were about to find, and at the same moment Smike, followed at some distance by a single hound, came running down the side of the stream, evidently on a drag directly towards him. About fifty yards from where he stood, and about four or five paces from the edge of the water, in a swampy spot in the meadow, was a small mass of tangled reeds, briars and bushes, perhaps twenty yards in circumference, or not so much. Right into this little thicket Smike's drag took him, and, to my groom's amazement, out on the grass rolled three otters and Smike all fighting, Smike yelling with fury and pain at the treatment he met with, and the young or three-parts grown otter, whom he had fixed on, screaming in concert, to all of which Newman added his view-halloo and whoop. The row had not lasted a second when hand over hand raced up the old hound, and with a rush knocked Smike and the three otters into the water, but seizing and assisting to kill the one Smike maintained his hold on. Having worried the first otter, I took up the chase of the other two, finding them both, and changing from one to the other occasionally, but at last settling to the old bitch otter. Than the work she cut out for us I never saw anything more beautiful. About the water meadows there are several streams, or rather one stream divided into several; one of these, a very swift but shallow one, ran by the side of a bank, on which was a "plashed" and double-laid blackthorn hedge, and up this stream the otter took her course, with scarce water enough at times to hide her. When the water shoaled too much she crept into the hedge, in which alone the terriers could follow her, and then it was perfect to see the hounds splashing up the water as, gazing into the hedge, they endeavoured to head and nick in upon the otter. When the hounds dashed on to the top of the blackthorns down the otter went again into the stream, and so on till other streams and deeper water were for a time regained. The chase with this old otter, hard at it, lasted an hour and three-quarters, in as hot and sunny a day in summer as needs be; and when the pack fairly hunted her down, forced her out of the water, and caught and killed her in a thick hedge, I was nearly run to a stand-still. Stretched on my back, the hounds having worried the otter, I was longing for something to drink, when my host of the night uncorked a bottle of porter "up" to the fullest extent, and fired a stream of hot froth into my parched throat. I thought I never should have recovered the use of my throat more; however, by a liberal donation from the cool trout stream, matters were set all right, and a warm bath, on my return to the house, enabled me to do ample justice to my friend's most hospitable fare. I viewed the second young otter just before killing the old one; but as we, the hounds and myself, were tired, I left him for a future day. I once found a bitch otter on the Efford stream in the act of making a couch for her young. Old Palestine, from the Grafton kennel, found and disturbed her in the midst of it. At her we went for seven hours and a quarter, with constant views; and, during that time, on a stump overhanging the river, *she miscarried*, and gave birth to two cubs, born a few days only before their time. A hound found them, and, when I took one in my hand, it was scarcely cold. She beat us from want of light, and well she deserved to escape. The work that myself and my keeper, James Dewy, did on that day, in tearing up holts, at times up to the waist in water, and then having to go in our wet things a distance of six miles at dark with tired hounds, was severer than I should like to undergo now, though there is no saying what the view of an otter will produce if I find another.

The buck-stalking in the New Forest was very perfect. Nothing could be wilder than the ground, or latterly than the deer, and I was obliged to adopt every kind of *ruse* to get a shot, particularly when the keepers and their assistants were killing every buck they could. At times I used to ride carelessly towards the deer and openly, caring nothing for the wind, whistling and singing, like forest "marksmen" after ponies and cattle; and now and then the deer would be deceived by it, and let me come within rifle distance, when I would watch my opportunity when they nodded at a fly, or fed, and drop from my horse into the heather. They would keep looking at the horse, and a few minutes would elapse before the thought struck them that the rider was no longer in sight; and, while they were making up their minds on the state of affairs, the bullet reached them. I saw one of these scenes very well told in the *Gloucester Chronicle*, by an eye-witness. The dress of a woman would at other times deceive them, and stalking with a horse would often succeed, and I have killed many a buck from a keeper's cart, the deer taking us for common wayfarers. In approaching deer, if they mistake you for a mere passer-by, the wind does not matter; they see you are a man, and they expect to scent you: but, in creeping to them unseen, the lightest air must be cared for, for if they wind a man and do not see him they are ever apprehensive that he has a design upon them. Many a deer have I made sure of, when he was about to gallop or trot by me, by a low short whistle. Not knowing there was a man near him, and hearing a noise, so shortly given that its whereabouts could not be at the instant defined, the deer was sure to stop, to ascertain, by listening for the sound again, that he was not running into danger, and then was the time for the shot. I have also been lying by several bucks on my face in the heather, unable to judge the best deer because they were also couched, and, to raise them, I have given a short sharp cry, not too loud; and in many instances the human voice, well regulated, will reach them enough to make them aware that a man is within hearing, without exposing his ambush or sending them away. When they rise to look about them then is the time for choice. Occasionally this plan fails; for, if the voice reaches them too distinctly, they bolt off with their haunches to the danger, and a shot cannot be taken.

When the deer were very shy, at the commencement of October, I wanted a good buck, and took a great deal of trouble to get him. After searching the forest all day I discovered a herd of about thirty deer, and among them some of the best bucks left in the vicinity of Burley Lodge; but they were all on a little narrow lawn, feeding or lying down, in the midst of short heather, with not a bush to screen the stalker. It was a gusty day, with occasional showers; the wind being high, much in my favour. It was a long and a wet stalk I had to make through the wet weather, and when the sun came out I lay still, when it blew and rained, then crawled on again. The heather was scarce above the top of my head, however low it was carried; and in some places, to keep out of sight, I was obliged to crawl on my breast. Now and then a little suspicious and capricious doe would look about her; once she either caught sight of my shoulder or a motion in the heather, and stared for about ten minutes right at me, but I lay on my face, with an occasional peep between the roots, and, so long as her forehead and erect ears were visible, I remained still. She at last also lay down, and then, when I looked up, nothing could be seen of the herd but the broad palmated tops of the old bucks' horns. "Now is the time," I thought; and on I crept, resolved not to cease from an endeavour in this cramped position, wet as I was, till I got within shot. I peeped up again, and found myself within fifty yards of the herd, all of them very quiet and lying down close together, their haunches to the wind and their heads obliquely towards me, so close that not even a head was fair without endangering other deer. I lay for at least half an hour, in the hope that some would rise and feed; but not a deer stirred. Seeing them so quiet I moved on again, and this time so far that, before raising my head, the deer being forward for the time of year, I could smell them. I now took off the handkerchief that I had wrapped round the lock of my rifle, and put on a fresh cap, lying on my side to do it, and I did not look at the deer again till I had recovered my breath and any little excitement of the heart the position and nerve had occasioned. When I peeped up I found myself scarce thirty yards from the deer, with seven or eight old bucks next me lying close together. I was cool by that time, and, in fact, getting cold, wet through as if I had swam the distance. Too close to attempt to raise them with my voice, I lay watching them, and at last perceived that one of the oldest heads among them never stirred anything but its ears, never rested along the ground, and never turned either way to knock off the flies. I had plenty of time in which to mark this peculiarity, and I fixed my eyes on the head to know the reason why. At last I could see a dark spot below the left ear in the neck, and satisfied myself that the deer I looked at had been hit by a ball. He might have wasted and not be the best deer. I could in that position judge nothing of the venison, but, thinking that he would get worse, my duty to the Crown made me resolve to kill him. Waiting, therefore, a long time for the other heads to go this way and that way at the flies, or to stretch out to rest on the grass, an opportunity arrived, and I fired. Up sprang the herd. My ear told me it was all right; and, as deer will at times do when so suddenly scared, they ran, and then paused for a moment at a distance of a hundred yards, when one of their number reeled among them, gave a violent spring, and crashed to the ground, ploughing up the turf with his horns; away went the herd, and I hastened up to give the *coup-de-grâce.* The buck was dead when I arrived, for the ball had struck above the old wound, nearer the horn in a more deadly place, and had settled the matter. He was a very old buck, had been one of the best on the walk, but had wasted a little in the last two or three days on account of the wound, but was, nevertheless, a very good deer. On the morning of the same day I had killed a fine old buck, but wasted to nothing, a small rifle bullet having been lodged in his flank. I was creeping among some very high furze used by the browse bucks near the keeper's lodge, and all at once came in sight of a fine old antler sticking upright in the gorse. I knelt down to stare at it; it remained perfectly still, and I felt sure that, if the owner of it was alive, he was looking towards me, in doubt if he had seen any motion in the gorse. Patience and flies then for each of us. I knew, as he got more convinced that he had seen nothing, that, if he was alive, he would nod at the flies, however slightly, and presently the horn did so. But where was the other horn? I wanted to see that to enable me to guess his head, for at that distance, with both horns in view to the brow antlers, I could have done so. Thus we were for half an hour, the horn and myself, the owner of the one still suspicious, and myself fearing to move lest he should bolt off. I could see nothing of his body, but it was a beautiful antler. Tired of suspense, I ventured to raise myself a little, with the rifle at my shoulder; he saw the motion, and raised his head to ascertain what caused it, so much so that I saw the stump of the other antler and the top of his forehead, through which I sent the ball and killed him on the spot. The magnificent deer had been ill-used; for not only had his antler been shot away by a powerful bullet, but there was a smaller one lodged in his flank, from the internal mischief of which he had become a mere skeleton. "Sad work," I said to myself; "and no man ought to shoot at a deer in the forest without a bloodhound within call."

## CHAPTER XVII

"The doe then said, 'The very dream you tell,
Proves that my vision verges on the truth :
'The curse' upon thy early love that fell,
The frown that thus hath blended with thy youth,
May still in hidden mystery be plann'd,
And death—my death—be pendent on thy hand.
Then would it grieve thee if thy favourite's eyes,
So deeply full of wild and lustrous love,
Should still turn to thee as their mistress dies,
Denied the hope of op'ning them above :
Or hast thou lov'd a love so dear and rare
That pity for her only could'st thou spare?"
*The Last of the New Forest Deer.*—G. F. B.

When not more than three or four good bucks were left on Whitley Ridge, I had a warrant for one; and Joseph Hall informed me that a very fine stranger had joined three browse bucks of his which were left, and that he hoped I would kill him in preference to the others, because, if scared by killing one in his company, the stranger would be sure to go back whence he came. It was a beautiful still September day, that on which I was after this buck, when summer seems to cling to the world around, as if loth to leave her woods and fields; warm as the dog-days used to be when I was a boy, and without a breath of air to stir the long gossamer webs that stretched along the grass. We had searched every shady dell and well-known haunt of these deer, and had peered over every heath and lawn, but without finding them; we therefore set it down that they were in New Copse, an enclosure lately thrown back into the forest. Thick as that wood was, and wary as the deer had become, it was in vain to think of getting at them thus: so we concluded to wait till their feeding-time in the evening. We were leaning on the rails of the buck-pen, rails put up to keep cattle from the deer when fed with hay,—rather a useless precaution in the neglected state of the "venerie," and considering the deer never got any,—and were thinking over the haunts we had visited, and if it were possible that they had escaped us. We were both leaning over the rail and looking on the ground, when a hollow sound of deer's feet struck my ear, and, turning my eyes to the right, I had but just time to reach out my hand to the keeper's shoulder to give him a pull, and we both sank flat on our faces together. There they were—three goodly bucks, the stranger, with two of the browse deer, trotting and capering at play, and coming right upon us. There was not even so much as a blade of long grass nor a thistle to hide us; so all we had to do was to lie flat, hide our faces and hands, and look as much like heaps of dirt or dead fern as possible. I ventured to raise my brow, my chin still on mother earth, out of curiosity, to see what the deer would do. The wind being favourable, they did not scent us, and I saw them repeatedly look over us for men in upright positions. Luckily they halted at about fifty yards' distance, and Hall looked me, for he dared not speak to knowledge of the stranger. They were all good bucks, perhaps one of the browse bucks was the fattest, but the stranger had the largest frame, and, as Hall prayed me to kill him, I resolved to accomplish it if possible. It was an anxious moment: he turned his well-rounded side at fifty yards for a beautiful body-shot; but I no more dared to lift the rifle in that exposed situation, than have offered him the bough of a tree, and expected him to take it, and await his death. To lie still and wait a fitting opportunity was all that I could do. A moment convinced us they were not yet out on their feed, and Hall whispered, "All right, sir: they are going to their beds among the rushes." He knew of the lairs they had previously used in some cool rushes beneath some old oak trees; and a moment after they began to walk about here and there with their heads down, and at last all three couched in the lairs to which Hall had alluded. When they lay down they were perhaps a hundred and fifty yards away from us, and nothing but their antlers to be seen. From the position they took there was nothing to screen us; but, after consulting for a little while, we deemed it possible to reach some low fern and an oak tree twenty yards nearer to the deer. On we sprawled on our breasts or backs, as the position served; but by the time we reached the oak one of the browse deer rose, and stood gazing around him. We had therefore to wait till he lay down again, and to make up our minds as to the next move. Could we but get about ten yards farther we should have more fern and a better line of trees: so, when the browse deer resought his lair, we moved, and gained the next oak. I was now in good distance for a body-shot, but the buck I wanted lay still, so still, that Hall proposed a farther advance. We crept again, and at last reached a large oak, within fifty yards of the deer. The stranger lay with his back to me, but his neck and the poll of his head were fair, and I proposed to shoot; but Hall, who was most anxious to get this buck, begged me not to risk a shot only at his constantly moving head, but to wait until he rose. In this instance I had a rest against the oak tree; and I was aiming at his head, though not quite determined to shoot, when up he stood broadside to me, and stretched himself. A moment so fair for a vital blow was of course not lost. I fired, and the buck fell with a ball through the region of the heart.

On another day on which I was out with Joseph Hall, a woodcutter reported three bucks at feed not far from us. We accordingly went in that direction, and discovered them feeding towards us. We couched in the long heather, and they came on directly to where we were; two were bare bucks, but the third was a decent deer. After watching them some time they came within shot; but the younger deer were always in danger till the buck I wanted was within fifty yards. I whispered to Hall, "Your shoulder," a demand he well understood, when I rested my rifle over it, and aimed at the deer; but, a piece of fern falling across the barrel, I had next to whisper, "The fern is in the way." He comprehended at once which piece of fern it was, and quietly reached his hand beneath, and pulled it from the root. The deer then sprang up and fell dead with the bullet through the spine of the neck. There is no better deer-stalker than Joseph Hall, and no man who knows a deer better. Of all the forest-keepers he certainly was the best I ever met, and never in any one particle did I find the information he gave me incorrect. Whatever he said as to the condition or age of a deer was always right, and he was ever most anxious that I should not be disappointed in my warrant. Although I can stalk a deer, and though I know the best buck when I get up to him, and am well acquainted with every beautiful proficiency in woodcraft, to have such a man as this in a wide wild forest, who has known each deer since they fell at fawning time, saved a vast deal of trouble; and, moreover, from his previous knowledge of the deer, he could tell me by a glance only at their head which was the best buck. He is in the prime of life, a first-rate stalker, and possessed of indomitable resolution, as the combat with a deer-stealer twice his size, as before narrated, proves; and if in these melancholy changes and destruction of the royal forests he should not be employed by the Crown, I could strongly recommend him to take charge of any private forest or park of deer. Holloway, who was keeper over Burley Walk, was an exceedingly good and superior man, and nothing pleased me more than his promotion to his present position; for, while overlooking the woodmen, etc., and passing their accounts, I think him so thoroughly capable, as to be fit for even further promotion. In these days of change, now that he is no longer a keeper, I know not what to call him. I only know that he is certainly not Bow Bearer, whatever his other duties may be. He was with me one afternoon when I went for a buck on Burley Lawn. On approaching some thorns we could see three pretty good deer at feed, and, crawling cautiously forward, we gained a clump of thorns by the side of the little stream, whence we could have a good view of them at about a hundred yards' distance. There was not much to choose between the three; but we thought the deer on the left the best, and resolved to have him. They fed towards us in a position not offering a fair mark; as in feeding the head was in a line with the body, and an ill-judged shot might have spoiled the whole buck. Upon the same lawn were three old blackcocks feeding; and their heads had been up more than once at the alarm-note of a jay who fled from the thorns, and sat chiding us on a distant oak. Luckily a hobby hawk stooped at the jay and made our tormentor fly away shrieking at him; and the blackcocks, thinking they knew all about it, fed on as quietly as before. But now a fresh stumbling-block to success appeared in a couple of magpies who lit on the lawn; and then one of them, springing on to the back of the buck I wished to kill, sat picking at the ticks that are more or less in the coats of all the forest deer, and impeding the buck's advance. When the magpie was up, the buck stood still, as if pleased with the assistance the bird was rendering. All this time the two other bucks, on whom the pie did not bestow his attention, kept approaching our ambush, as did the blackcocks too, and every moment I thought our whereabout would be detected by the one or the other, and that the best buck would be warned of his danger. Presently the buck with the magpie perched on his haunches turned obliquely away, a position I particularly dislike when desiring to kill the venison clean; but, danger being in every instant of delay, I asked Holloway for his shoulder, when, not finding it steady, I changed, and pressed the rifle against the side of the tree before me, intending to hit the buck through the heart. The bullet struck him a trifle too forward, but gave him his death-blow; for he ran about thirty yards, and fell in some high rushes, the astonished magpie thinking he could not chatter nor fly fast enough to the woods. I loaded my rifle, and we went up and discovered him not dead but bleeding to death: however, as it was best to dispatch him as quickly as possible, I got so near that I could see his antlers and the tip of one ear, and, guessing his head, I fired; but, as often happens in a partial view of the head, the ball grazed it only, when the buck made a convulsive bound or two towards us, and Holloway shot him through the brain.

On finding that I had been entrusted with the killing of some of the royal deer, my first object was to get a good bloodhound. Now we often see things with long ears, and of the right colour, but which are no more real bloodhounds than a turnspit is a foxhound; but I was very fortunate in obtaining from Mr. Mitchel, the chief friend of the animals in the Regent's Park Gardens—for he is so in every sense of the word—a bloodhound of about twelve months old, as perfect when he came to me, in all the attributes of that race, to look at, as I ever beheld. His wrinkled front, narrow forehead, rather sunken eyes, and long, fine, sweeping ears, that never rose—or cocked, as the saying is—and which did, indeed, "bathe in dew" when he stooped his head, gave every sign of a true ancestry. In addition to these marks and his long hanging lips, in shape he was perfect. Well rounded in the ribs, and deep in the brisket, his legs and feet were perfection itself; with a loin to heave him along, and a stern to it that, when feathering on a deer, lashed his sides like the tail of a lion in a rage. His colour of the richest black-tan. It was not long before I clipped the usual capital B on his left side, and began to make him handy. No easy job at first; and I soon found that a primary settlement must be made as to who was to be master—he or I. The first bone of contention was his feeding-trough, as, until he had polished it clean, he was in no way inclined to let me have it back again. To get the trough, and be master, was, in this case, difficult, because, in the onset, I did not desire to hurt him; and as he had a knack, when in a quarrel of this sort, to fly right at one's throat, it was difficult to keep him out without it. I took the trough, however, with a short truncheon in my hand, as well as a little switch, with as much a manner of careless authority as possible; and the instant it moved, he made a sort of spring, and then stood across it, as one dog will do to another when, with stiff legs, bristles up, and teeth shown, he threatens battle. "Druid!" I cried, in a tone of astonishment, "what now?" and giving him a push out of the way with the truncheon, ready in case of the worst, I marched off with the trough, and returned and caressed him. The only time we came to blows was in my little four-wheel shooting-carriage, where he was coupled to the seat, by me. He would struggle to get free and make a noise: and when I gave him a slight tap, he returned it by flying at me; but I met him with a hard blow from the fist, which for ever after settled the dispute as to head man. I can do anything with him now; his temper is beautiful, and as playful as a kitten's, and, though untractable to strangers, with me he is docility itself. Druid is of the largest size, and as stout to work, literally, as the day is long. I will give the reader an account of what I have seen him do. During the summer, when he first came to me, I was lucky enough to kill—for the most part—or miss all the bucks so clean, that a bloodhound was not needed; but when the doe slaughter commenced, then Druid's services came in vogue. The does, prickets, sorels, and sors, all of which were condemned, at last became so wary and so few, that to look for one in winter in the woods and over the wide extent of rough ground, was like looking for a needle in a bottle of hay. I had recourse then to Druid, and the perfection of that single hound in drawing for and finding a deer in covers of from four to six hundred acres, was the most remarkable I ever saw. I used to give him the wind of the likeliest quarters, and commence in the ride that best suited it: and I have seen him wind deer in their lairs at more than a hundred yards off, standing on his hinder-legs to catch the wind better, looking back with a smiling face at me, and then drawing right up to them, without speaking, till he had roused them; then, and not till then, would boom upon the breeze the deep notes of his faultless and unerring tongue. Thus chase after chase commenced; I had no pony at that time available—my forester being about to have a foal—so I ran to meet the coming tongue at points, and obtained a shot when I could. When a man reaches my time of life, his paces and his strength begin to be not so fast or powerful as at an earlier date; and yet, in these chases over heavy ground and through thickets, with two guns sometimes on my shoulder, the eleven-gauge double-shot gun charged with a double B. cartridge, and my single rifle, for at first I roused the does in threes and fours, and have more than once, in running shots, killed three with the three barrels; loaded thus, I have laughed to see my men divesting themselves of their jackets, as if they were going hay-making in summer, and even then not seeing so much of the run as I did.

There are two little streams that run from the bogs and enter Holmesley enclosure, wide apart, at different places, when they enter the wood; but in the middle of the cover they almost meet when they cross the main ride, and flow on thus to the Efford stream, joining it close by Christchurch railway station. These streams may be about four or five feet in the bank, but are very shallow, just rippling over the bright gravel; knee-deep to a deer in some places, in others just above the foot. The young oak trees are high, and the cover hollow, near these streams, and a deer or hound can be seen, in places, many hundred yards from the main ride. The first time, after a chase of nearly five hours, that Druid fairly hunted down a doe, was in Holmesley enclosure and its environs, when, finding that the doe was beaten, and hanging to "soil," as we term it, or water, I posted myself on the main ride, as much in command of the streams as possible. Farther up the stream, and farther down, at times, I heard Druid at fault; his heavy tongue, that had been knelling the death of the deer all day, would be silent for a quarter of an hour together, and then ring on again. I knew well what was the matter, and that the deer was keeping the water, and changing from stream to stream, and that Druid could not make her out; the nature of our sport, however, admitted of but little aid from a huntsman: in this case the huntsman's help was in the rifle; the hound must learn of himself to overcome all difficulties. After a time, Druid went on again, and several of these checks happened when I could not see what took place, although I knew it all as well as if I had seen it. Soon afterwards the doe came in view a long way ahead of the hound, as I could hear by his tongue, very much beaten, and stopping frequently to listen. She entered one of the streams, and walked for a hundred yards down the middle of it, got on the bank, and listened again, alas! to the never-failing tongue. On she came, at a trot, to the second stream, and did the same thing, walking down it till she was within twenty-five yards of me. I could not see her, by reason of the high banks, but I could hear her in the shallow water. She paused for some little time, and then jumped on the bank to listen, when the rifle laid her dead.

Twice this extraordinary hound hunted a doe and a pricket out of the forest into the manors, killing one of them near Ringwood, and the other in the same direction. In one of these instances, by sinking the wind, he ran us clean out of all knowledge of him, and he dined on the venison; in the other, my two men, with the gazehound Baron, contrived to be in at the death. When aware of the vicinity of a deer, it is beautiful to watch the curious way Druid will run his nose along every twig or spray of fern that might have been touched by the deer on his passage; and I have frequently been brought up to the lair of a deer five hours after she had passed, without Druid's flinging his tongue. On one occasion the deer had been seen at a certain time by a furze-cutter, who gave me the information on which I laid on the hound. It is this beautifully silent method of drawing up to a deer, that has afforded me such signal success. During one of my "draws" for a deer, my men were with the hound, and I was posted under some hollies, their orders being to draw up to me. From out of Holmesley enclosure, or rather wishing to come out of it, there approached a man, a little child, and a small donkey with a cart containing a considerable load of wood. The rain and thoroughfare for faggots had rendered the ride a deep bog, and just before the trio reached the gateway the cart and the donkey stuck fast. Many struggles took place to effect progress, with intervals between to permit the little donkey to catch her wind, but all in vain. Prayers and exhortations, and the most endearing expressions, were used to Charlotte and to Pilot, for the donkey went by both names; but, though she was as true to the collar as any London dray-horse, poor little Pilot could not accomplish the way. I watched their proceedings from my ambush, and the more so, because not once was the donkey sworn at or struck; and the man himself pushed behind the cart with all his might. The child, a little boy, was too young to be of any manual service. Resting my rifle against a tree, I addressed the man, and told him to put his shoulder to one wheel, while I put mine to the other, and we pushed the cart through, till it was landed on the firmer heath. Having paused to take breath, on looking into the poor fellow's face, I saw he was blind; in short, that he had hardly any eyes, not much nose, and scarce any lip; his face being one frightful scar. On asking him if he was not blind, he replied, "Yes; all he could ascertain, by vision, was the difference of night and day;" having a shilling in my pocket, I gave it him, the more induced to it, as he told me "that the parish refused him any allowance." He was very thankful for the aid I had given him in each instance; and when complimented on not ill-using his donkey, he told me "he was too fond of her; that she cost him fourpence soon after she was born, and that he reared her by hand, and shared all he had with her." We parted, and having made some inquiries as to the character of the poor fellow, which were satisfactory, I wrote a letter to his donkey, enclosing another shilling, as follows, which letter she was enjoined to read to him. I sent it by post to him, "for his donkey." She was to tell him "that the man who helped them out of the mud had sent her a shilling for her master, with which she was to redeem the price he had paid for her, and then serve him all the better, because she was free. She was to tell him, that the man had watched how kind he was to her; that he had never beaten her, nor used any ill language; and that, so long as he continued kind and good in his general conduct, he should always have a hearty dinner given to him on Christmas Day. By what had befallen him now, he was to remember that there was always an eye upon the actions of every man's life, though that eye was invisible to all; and that a good action was sure to meet with its reward." Having delivered myself of the above sermon, I signed the letter "Pilot's Friend." Of this I heard no more, when, as I was going into the forest with my friend and old hunting companion, Mr. Lindsay, to look for a deer, we met the blind man, donkey, cart, and child. I stopped him, and asked if his donkey had received a letter, and he replied in the affirmative; and when asked if he knew "the man" who helped him out of the mud, gave him the money, and wrote the letter, he said, "Yes, sir; it was you," mentioning my name. Having asked him how, blind as he was, he had come to that conclusion, he replied, "that putting it all together, first and last, he thought it could be nobody else but me." A few words followed this, but as they were not complimentary to the activity of the resident gentry as to pushing the carts of poor men through the mud, the reader will permit me to omit them.

## CHAPTER XVIII

"The day wears late,—I can but try
Remain with 'Thor'; thine ear
Will tell thee if the death I cry
Of one of those good deer."
*The Last of the New Forest Deer.*—G. F. B.

I HAVE before had occasion to allude to Jesse's *Anecdotes of Dogs*, and to assert that truth in regard to them is infinitely more astonishing than any fiction that man can imagine, and, by way of illustration, I offer to the public a circumstance enacted in regard to vension-stealers, by myself and my black retriever dog Tramp. Tramp, to all appearance, is a cross between the Newfoundland dog and setter, and was given to me by Mr. Peacocke, of Pilewell Park, as useless to him from his headstrong humour. I soon found that the faults complained of were not in Tramp originally, but in his stupid breaker, whoever that man was, who had most decidedly whipped them into him. When he did wrong, therefore, I adopted the oil, in an endeavour to soften the vinegar humours the lash and want of judgment had mixed up, checking him only by voice and manner when he was in error, and fondling and caressing him when doing well. The dog really did not seem at first to know what a caress was, but seemed to imagine it a prelude to induce him to be caught to undergo punishment. Tramp trained on very well, and he is now a perfect retriever save in one thing—he will run and pick up before he is bidden to do so. He therefore only accompanies me in wild ground, where his running in cannot do much harm; and in wild ground among furze, to hunt, find, and then retrieve, he is perfection.

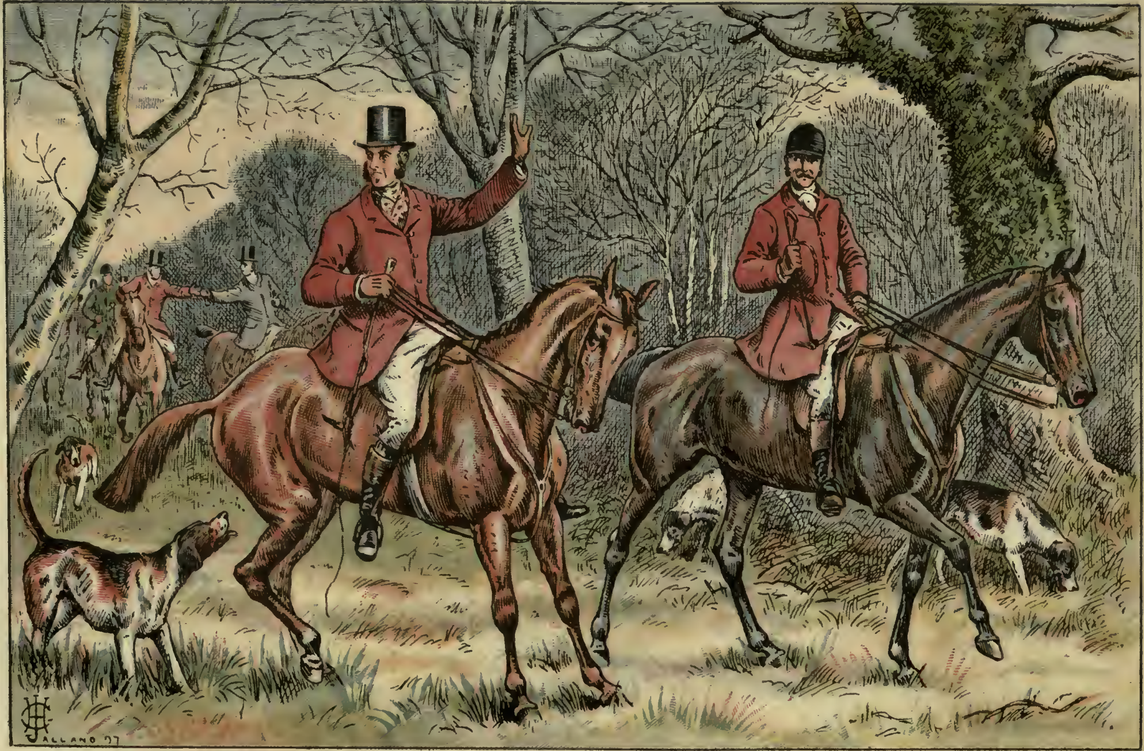
In the winter of 1852 I was out on Holmesley walk with a warrant for a doe, and killed her on the edge of a bog in a valley running down to the railway, in sight, though a distant one, of three plate-layers, or navvies as they are vulgarly called, who were at work on the line. In company with me, only in couples, when I killed her, were my terriers and Tramp, as, after killing the doe, I intended to beat for woodcocks and rabbits. A Highland deer greyhound, and a very good one, the property of Sir Percy Shelley, was with me when the deer was killed, who was afterwards to be coupled up when the terriers were called for. It is a habit among the keepers in this forest to let a deer lie without anybody with it while they go for a conveyance to take it to the nearest lodge, and I have often asked them if they never had one stolen. They replied in the negative; but the circumstance I am narrating inclines me to think that deer have been stolen in this particular manner, although the theft has not been acknowledged. I did not like to leave the vicinity of the venison, so, while the woodman was gone for his cart, I continued on the adjacent hills, beating for woodcocks and rabbits. After being out of sight of the deer for some time, perhaps three-quarters of an hour, I reached a spot where I ought to have obtained a view of her, but could not make her out. The cart had not arrived to fetch her, of that I was sure; so, thinking perhaps that the heather hid her from my sight, I despatched my man to the spot, and bade him, if the deer was gone, to hold up his hat. He reached the spot, and the signal was made of the disappearance of the deer. Expecting the worst, that she had been carried off, I hastened to the place, and there, sure enough, was where her throat had left a sanguinary trace as she had been dragged out of sight into some furze, and then all traces of her disappeared. It was in cold, harsh, dry weather, and on the hills the footstep of a man made no impression, while over the bogs, if he stepped on the tufts of moss, they rose again after the step had passed, and no trace remained in that locality to denote a passage. I confess to have been angered by this incident, as I did not think that there was a man who, in the daylight and at a risk of being seen, would have attempted to steal anything of mine; so, as a last hope, I ordered my man to run off to a distant hill, where he could command a view of the low lands on one side, and I sent two of the woodmen, who had been by when I killed the deer, also in different directions: the steps of all three of these men were more or less stained with the blood of the deer, and they had all handled her in pulling her from the bog to a dry place. To this I beg the reader's particular attention. The men having gone on their several missions, I made the usual sign to Thor that I had adopted to put him on the scent of a stricken deer, which he tracked very well, if the trail was quite fresh, nearly as well as a hound; and I endeavoured to obtain assistance through him. But it was of no avail; he always went back to the spot where the doe had lain dead. While endeavouring to make Thor understand my loss, Tramp, who was at my heels, stepped in front, and, looking up in my face with a very peculiar expression, suddenly put his nose to the ground, trotted a little way, and looked back to see if I observed him. I did observe him, and became at once convinced that he was about to aid me; indeed, so peculiar was his manner and method, that there was no mistaking it. He went off at a long, dejected-looking trot, more resembling a mad dog's action than his own graceful method when on game, and I followed him in the greatest possible anxiety. When he came to the spot on which my man and the two woodmen, strangers to him and both tainted with the deer, had severed and gone different ways, Tramp came to a check, tried each track, and seemed perplexed, looking up to me for aid, which I had no power to give. All I could do was to say, " Good dog Tramp," and to encourage him quietly. To my infinite joy he again took up the running on a strange line that had nothing to do with the steps of my people, and on we went over bog and hill and at last down to the railway. I had both my guns on my shoulders, the rifle and shot gun, besides ammunition, and, so loaded, Tramp's long trot kept me at a pace rather difficult to maintain; when he checked at the railway I was, therefore, some distance behind, and I saw him try in each direction and then look back for me. Just as I reached him he went on a line of scent down by the side of the railway towards the three plate-layers before mentioned, but, after carrying it on a short distance, he would not have it, but returned to the wires, up to which he had decidedly been right. He then for the first time crept through upon the plates, looked at me, and carried on the scent over the line to the heather on the other side. Here, then, for the first time, I had ocular demonstration as to his fidelity: in the soft sand between the rails I saw the print of a man's footstep, not anything like so large a foot as mine, and yet, when I placed mine purposely by it, it was evident that the stranger was heavier than I was or carried some weight, for he sank much deeper in the sand. Short as the space permitted me was, I took notice of the nails of his shoes and any peculiarity on heels or soles; and, so true had Tramp been to the trail, that in one place he had actually stepped into the footprint of the man. There was the footprint of a second man, but that I did not much observe. The ditch of the embankment was wet where Tramp jumped it, and he checked on the other side; but my eye caught sight of the bottom of the ditch as I got over, and I saw that the water was newly mudded. A little lower down the ditch was dry again, and there were the small footsteps of my friend once more! Calling now in full confidence to Tramp, I set him right, and he carried the scent some distance down the ditch, and then away faster than ever in his long trot up the heathery hill and into the high furze towards the village of Burley, notorious for more than one bad character. Up the hill I followed to where Tramp disappeared, but, before I got there, Tramp returned as if seeking me, with great quickness in his manner and anxiety that I should arrive; he disappeared for a moment again, and then, as I neared the spot, he came to meet me, full of jumping joy and congratulation, and so he led me on into and through the gorse at times, more by the motion he gave it than any sight I had of him, till I came up to him, standing joyfully on guard over the body of the recaptured deer. We were then not far from the village, and I knew that whoever it was that had been obliged to abandon the load was safe enough housed by that time.

Having reached a conspicuous place on the hill, whence to signal my man, he came up, having begun to follow me as soon as he guessed what I was after, and, giving him possession of the deer, I returned to the railway, entered a cottage on the line to see if any man was there, and, finding that the owner of the cottage near which Tramp's chase had passed was one of the plate-layers I had before observed at work, I took to the rails, followed by Tramp, Thor, and my terriers, as I knew no train was due, and proceeded by that unusual route directly for the three labourers. In nearing them I observed that, instead of looking up to stare at the unwonted trespass, each man became so busy with his pickaxe that one would have supposed they had been working for a wager, so, casting the guns to the left arm, I came right upon them, touched one man on the shoulder, collared the second, and told the third I arrested them all as having taken part in a robbery. You might have knocked them all down with a feather, so taken aback were they. I turned up the smock of one who had his on to see if there was any blood about him, but none was to be seen, and a glance at their feet showed me that every shoe was a larger one than mine; so, however conversant they might have been with the robbery, none of the three had carried the deer. They protested their innocence, and I asserted my belief of their guilty participation, because they were in full view of the spot whence the deer had been stolen and where she had been borne across the line; so I quitted them, with an assurance that I would that day apply to the inspectors of the line for their discharge unless they cleared themselves by stating all they knew of the transaction.

On reaching home I directly sent for a vigilant constable of police, and he started the same evening or the next morning, I forget which, and elicited such evidence from the plate-layers that he took into custody the little man who carried the stolen deer, and who was but recently discharged from gaol, having undergone punishment for stealing a gun. The next morning another constable captured an accomplice who had aided in the theft, a man who had been previously fined for a savage assault, in company with four or five others, on Bromfield, one of the marksmen of the forest, whom they had beaten and left for dead. These fellows were committed to Winchester to await their trial, and were afterwards convicted in two months with hard labour.

Now this is perhaps the most extraordinary instance of sagacity in that wonderful animal the dog ever related. Tramp had never run the scent of a deer, nor the scent of a man, and yet out of three or four lines of scent, the men all strange to him, and all more or less blooded or tainted with the deer, he distinguished the man who carried her, although not a drop of fresh blood fell to direct him, as the thieves took the precaution to tie up the head and throat before they removed her. The check where the lines of scent crossed each other showed that the various footsteps occasioned a difficulty; and also the one at the railway wires before he carried the trail over the line, that check too was accounted for. The thief had put the deer down there, while he ran to the plate-layers and bought a promise of silence from them by saying that they should have a share of the spoil. When Tramp showed an inclination to run down the line instead of across it, he was perfectly true to the steps of the man; but he had not gone forty yards before he discovered that he did not then carry the burthen he was endeavouring to overtake. He returned, therefore, before he had run those footsteps out, and resumed the scent where the deer was again lifted and carried on.

I have never in the whole course of my experience been able to account for scent, or what it is that leads on the gifted dog. I have seen hounds plunge their heads and noses in the most



"I smell a fox!"

*G. H. Jalland.*

*Facing p. 272.*

fetid refuse and carrion, so much so, that they were a nuisance to be near, and yet, in the midst of such an abomination borne along with them, and apparently overpowering every other smell, and tainting the surrounding air, they could pick out and inhale the scent of a fox, or even a hare, of the presence of which neither man nor any other animal but a hound was aware. In speaking of noses, I once made a middle-aged gentleman very irate, who, while I was drawing for a fox with twenty couples of as good foxhounds as ever entered a wood, suddenly pulled up his horse in the cover ride, and exclaimed, "I smell a fox!" When he said this the hounds were all round us, and not one even feathered or in any way grew busy. "Do you?" I replied, "then I wish you would be the papa of my next litter of puppies, for you have a finer nose than any dog in my pack."

In breeding, gentle reader, and only then, you are permitted to use the term "dog" to a male foxhound. The middle-aged gentleman grew excessively red, and, though he said nothing to me, I was afterwards told that, although admitting that my wish was uttered good-humouredly, he felt himself hurt and insulted at the idea of his being the father of puppies. It is a shrub called the tree St. John's wort that smells like a fox, and induces the ignorant to utter such exclamations. I encourage the shrub round my house, as it is very hardy, and ground game will not touch it, and it affords me an opportunity to illustrate the mistake, in regard to the smell of a fox, to men who have committed it.

During the month of July 1853, when the deer were getting very scarce, under leave from the Crown, I was very glad to get any gentleman to accompany me in search of them, as two or three guns attending on Druid's efforts were better than one, the more so as it permitted me to aid the hound in drawing and running. Mr. Boultbee, as well as Mr. Calvert, who were quartered with their troops of the Royal Horse Artillery at Christchurch Barracks, were just the active aids I wanted, and were very fond of the amusement. Mr. Boultbee was frequently out with me, and I am happy to say that, unlike ninety-nine men out of a hundred calling themselves sportsmen in the present day, he really understood all arts of woodcraft, and was safe to be entrusted with a horn, either to call the hound or to make me understand at a distance what was happening. To entrust a young sportsman with a horn is the greatest compliment that can be paid him: to an infinity of old ones whom I know, all that I could conscientiously offer them would be a cork to stop up their mouths, to prevent them too-tooing on their obnoxious wind-instrument, deceiving the hounds, or mystifying and deafening their hearers. The horn, the flute, and the fiddle (I am now carrying my Reminiscences from the field to the drawing-room of the fair sex, and I assure my reader in no jocular vein) have caused more matrimonial unhappiness than any other kind of instrument known, and that is saying something; and I am aware of many ladies who have let the use of the harp and pianoforte fall, rather than have to bear the sharps and flats—please ye, married gentlemen, be not angry, I apply these words to the gamut, not to you personally—misplaced by their husbands, as well as the erroneous notes and false concords, or indeed no concord at all, to which they were subjected, bearing all the blame the while for their commission. Were I advising young ladies as well as gentlemen, I should bid them ascertain, as one of the chief points of domestic felicity, if their admirers played on any wind-instruments, or moved the bowels of fiddles into uncompassionate strains; and if they discovered that they either straddled around a double-bass or violoncello, induced from the fiddle noises running from the gruff grunt of a sow in farrow up to the dying shrieks of a shrill house mouse, or made wry faces over a flute, why I would have every proposition for an espousal refused, or else the swain should submit to his catgut, flute and horn being stringently bound up from use or abuse in the marriage settlements. Heroes or admirers ought not for their own sakes to play on horns or flutes; the first makes them resemble Æolus or the personification of the stormy south wind, and the second takes from the divine image every look of wisdom, while the tongue twiddles with a little hole for the lips to whistle through, the eyes on each occasion, as well as the hue of the cheeks and size of the temporal arteries, indicating a near approach to apoplexy. My friend Lord Arundell is a very fine musician, playing beautifully on several instruments, and frequently travels by train with his cornopean. If he is in a carriage by himself he asks no leave, but blows away, but if there are other people in it, he puts to them an awful question, which no man dares to himself to answer in the negative: "Do you like music?" Every man is sure to say "Yes," when out comes the instrument, similar in its unsparing tenacity to Facey's flute, which moved "Me Oncle Gilroy" to tears, and "Soapy Sponge" to playing at cards, and the passengers are plied to such an extent, that they have for ever after an antipathy to anything like a wind-instrument. I saw the train at the Spetchley station in Worcestershire deliver upon the platform Lord Arundell's travelling companions, none of whom had ever seen him before. They came forth delirious ghosts, getting out they knew not where, and asking incoherent questions for quiet inns, while Arundell looked out after them, laughing, and winking at me as much as to say, "I've given them enough of it."

To return to the more legitimate theme of my Reminiscences, Mr. Boultbee was with me, when in July 1853 Druid found a buck in Wotton enclosure. Now, as to this buck, I must tell a curious circumstance, for I am sure he was the same that I had found in the winter: the fact at first looked as if it went far to prove that fays, wood demons, or fairies still occasionally used their magic wands. Orders were given that none of us were to kill any male deer, which would sell the next summer as warrantable venison. Therefore, according to the strict intention of this command, fawns, does, prickets, sorels, and sors were alone free to be hunted. The heads of old bucks, with their antlers on, are ever marketable things, and belong to the keepers; and I am perfectly convinced that in some places the orders of the Commission were not obeyed, and that, simply for the sake of the heads of bucks. I found two male deer, bare bucks then, who would have been warrantable bucks now, dead in the forest from rifle-balls, that had escaped wounded, to perish, of no use to any one; and, as to the buck I am speaking of, I saw the following mysterious fact happen. Druid had found him in Wotton enclosure, while Mr. Lindsay was with me. The woodman, Gulliver, saw him first, and reported him to me to be either a bare buck or a year older, he could not distinctly see which; I saw him afterwards, and was perfectly sure to the same extent, just as he reached the high road by the turnpike near Holmesley enclosure, out of which road, after a few strides, he gained the cover. Between the time when I saw him over the road and his jumping into the cover, the fairies seemed to have changed him into a doe, and they could not have been three seconds about it; to prove what I say, the keepers shot at this deer, and asserted that in their eyes it was a doe. In July in the succeeding summer, Mr. Boultbee and myself being together, Druid found a buck in his second year of buckhood, but in his sixth year from the time of his birth, about the same place where he had found the buck metamorphosed by the fairies, and after working him some time round the wood, Mr. Boultbee's horn signalled him away in the direction of the railroad, and then he viewed him ahead of the hound over a railway bridge into the heath near the keeper's lodge. Ahead of the buck was a vast extent of high fern and gorse, where, after his work in the wood we deemed it not unlikely that he would lie down, so the thing to do was to "slot" him if possible to his lair, previously stopping and taking up the hound. Luckily for us, Druid checked by the side of the railway, and enabled us to come up with him, and, getting on before, to catch him as he crossed the bridge. This became the more necessary, as their slots showed us that three lesser deer had passed the bridge the same morning. We took up the track of the buck, and carried it some distance along the paths in the heather, Mr. Boultbee aiding in tracing it, till we came decidedly to where he had struck off from the beaten path into the heath and fern. We then drew up in line, a man between the two guns, to beat for him, when James Bromfield exclaimed to Mr. Boultbee, on coming to some old hollow furze, "Look out, sir, it's likely;" and the words were hardly uttered when up sprang the buck, and bounded away directly to Mr. Boultbee's right, offering no clean shot, save at the back of his head; we both fired, and though at a long distance the buck fell, but rose again, and made for Wilverley enclosure. I snatched my single rifle from my man's hand, and shot at him as he ran, and missed him, when he again stood still; but as Druid was by this time roaring on his traces, the running again commenced. Having gained the wood, he gave us plenty to do, for the wounds which knocked him down had only stunned him for a time; however, after a random shot or two, which again struck him, and one which missed him, Mr. Boultbee got a good chance, and finished the matter. He was a nice deer, considering the way in which the forest had been continuously disturbed, and, according to the rates fixed by the Crown at which the venison was to be sold, I valued him at sixpence a pound. He would have been better but for the following fact, which utterly put to flight my superstition as to the fairies. A rifle-ball had struck him over the hip, and glancing from the set of the ribs on the backbone, it had run within the skin to an inch above the tip or wither of the shoulder, and there lodged under the skin of the neck. On examination, the appearance of the graze indicated that it must have been received just about the time when, from the keepers' account, the buck which my hound followed across the road into Holmesley Wood had been changed into a doe, and as such, to their eyes, fired on by them. I feel sure, civil to them as I always am, that the fairies did not change the keepers' doe into a buck to deceive me; and therefore my conclusion very naturally is, that the keepers, in disobedience of orders, shot at a deer a year older than they had authority to do, and flagrantly disobeyed the commands of the Commission. I am confident that on Wotton and Holmesley they did so, not only from finding prohibited aged male deer dead, their deaths caused by rifle-balls, but because I have missed four good bucks from those walks that, in obedience to orders, I had spared a dozen times over, and should have been glad to have bought in season at a shilling a pound. This is too bad, and only goes to prove how much a head keeper or ranger over all has been and is needed. I had no idea till August 1853 that the fawns of does killed in July would live without the mother; but I have found two solitary but very strong male fawns, in the best possible condition, and their stomachs filled with green food, without a vestige of milk, like old deer, in the strongest health and vigour. I killed the doe belonging to one of these fawns in Wotton enclosure, and then my bloodhound ran the fawn in cover for an hour and a half, and lost him at dark. Ten days after I found this fawn in his original lair, and ran him an hour before I could get a shot at him, and when killed he was in beautiful condition. On another occasion, I found a fawn in Holmesley enclosure, who, after a turn or two in cover, went away and crossed the railway between Wotton and Wilverley, and then ran the round of Wilverley enclosure, and the heaths adjoining, for two hours and ten minutes, when I got a shot at and slightly wounded him; Druid then ran into him on the open heath between Wilverley and Burley. This fawn had no sign of milk for food, while, at the same time, the kidneys were almost covered with fat.

## CHAPTER XIX

"The doe press'd to me, as the wild thing comes
 When hard-brow'd winter drives it to our doors,
And gentle, timid creatures seek our homes
 From forest depths and unfrequented moors.
I raised her face, and kissed it with delight;
 Her eyes the stars that bless'd the silent night;
Then, as we parted, still to meet again,
My soul confess'd a deep, sad sense of pain."
*The Last of the New Forest Deer.*—G. F. B.

Although the sport is magnificently fine and wild in this lovely forest, there is a melancholy feeling attached to the destruction of the deer, that strikes the mind, particularly in many of its most beautiful shades, when, underneath the spreading trees that bend over its amber streams, the deer-hunter sees impressed, *for the last time*, on the moist ground, the footsteps of the last doe and fawn that shall ever mirror in or drink of its waters again. It was said of Robin Hood that, outlaw as he was, he would rather fast than kill a doe; and I confess that I hate to lay the rifle in rest on a doe that is out of season. It must be done, however, and I try to stifle disinclination with the knowledge, that, perhaps if I did not kill the doe, her sufferings would be prolonged by some unskilful hand. Yesterday, the 10th of August 1853, in Boldrewood Walk, while attending on Druid, tracing where a deer had been in the night in Holiday Hill enclosure, having entered from Home Hill at a gap in the palings, in which latter place the keepers had been with their hounds the preceding day, my man suddenly put to me the question of "What is Druid jumping at, sir?" I had just time to say, "He's a deer before him," when, in two or three more jumps over the low tangled bushes the hound roared, and up sprang two does. They were out of sight in an instant; but directly after Druid brought them round, and I killed them left and right, as fine dry does as a man need look at at this season of the year. The next thing we found was a fawn, which I shot at but did not kill; when, having changed from the fawn, we took a deer away into the open forest, and after a great deal of cold hunting I got a shot at a doe—alas! she was a wet one—and killed her. Whether the fawn that I shot at had joined its mother, and then couched, the hound continuing on the line of the doe, I cannot tell: I tried to find and recover the fawn, but in vain. While on the traces of these deer, like Robinson Crusoe, when he saw the print of a human foot on the desert shore, I was startled with the slot of a red deer, and I was in doubt, as the impression was very faint, whether of a hart or hind, though I was inclined to believe that it was the slot of the former.[1] Rumour says, and the keepers say, "there is but one red deer left in the forest, and that is a hind;" but, for all this, from the single impression I saw, I have my doubts; and though I am not prepared, against all the above authority, to assert that there is a stag, I should not be surprised to see, besides the hind, a male red deer. It was a single impression where the deer had placed a foot in jumping a bank, and made in dry crumbling dust; so that though I could swear to the slot, it did not afford me much personal or venison information.

From my knowledge of this forest I feel convinced that, under the present Act of Parliament, the public money is being thrown away, not intentionally or from any neglect, but from a want of an intimate knowledge of the peculiarities of the different strata of soil, the length of time I have spent in it affording me the means of general and thorough observation. I defy any surveyor, I care not who he is, to march for a few days through upwards of sixty thousand acres of varying land, and then lay down a general rule of guidance for the cultivation of timber. Of this I am perfectly sure; and, by way of illustration, I will take the large enclosure just fenced in, but not planted, in the neighbourhood of Brockenhurst, extending to Pondhead, that there are sites set out for planting that, had I the direction of such land, should be irrigated, or certainly left untouched, instead of drained. The oak, to be of any service, must have clay, and a depth for the tap-root;[1] and there is in this forest a stratum of sand and clay, to either of which a preponderance may be given by the amount of existing moisture. If you drain it, you will dry it into sand; if you permit it to be wet, the clay will increase. In some of the wettest places there grows some of the finest timber; on the hills, generally, grows much fine timber; but then there are many of the hills as wet as the lowlands, while throughout is a diversity of soil for which no one rule can be adopted. The conclusion I have come to is, that like the farming on Tiptree Hall as well as that of Mr. Huxtable, the present account-book of the New Forest will leave,

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[1] It was afterwards proved that there were two or three stags left in the forest.

"in guise uncivil,
A deuced balance with the devil."

The most extraordinary methods of killing deer I ever beheld, I witnessed when at Charborough Park. Mr. Drax holds battues by himself among his deer, and kills all the venison sometimes in one day. The whole herd having been feathered and netted into a corner, Mr. Drax and occasionally myself proceeded into the midst of them, at one time to kill all the fawns, at another all the fat bucks, and perhaps a mighty stag or two. The effect of this is, that of course much of the venison has to be given away; and consequently every gentleman or yeoman to whom a haunch is given, finds himself haunted with a heated joint that must be dressed directly, without a soul to help him in the rare solemnity. Letters of invitation cross each other on the road, each man seeking for a guest, but each guest possessing at one and the same time the very viand he invites his neighbour to discuss. Each man must dine alone; or if they do not do so, they are obliged for a few days to undergo a surfeit of venison dinners, at last esteemed as no favour at all. With the fawns it is the same. On a given day each voter at Wareham surfeits on a fawn, which must be dressed the day he receives it, or in its heated state it would not be good for twenty-four hours. Another sad loss arising from this battue at the deer is, that after a shot or two, when the bucks and stags find themselves penned in, they stab a multitude of other deer, and half the venison for the next year is spoilt or maimed. I have seen a ball from Mr. Drax's rifle strike down at a time three or four deer that were not venison. Charborough is the only place where I ever saw a battue of this description. I remember the first year that the additional lands were thrown from cultivation into the park, enlarging it I fear to say how much, but extending its open undulations to such a degree that I christened them "the prairies." We were then to shoot bucks and fawns, which Mr. Drax and myself did till I was really sorry for the indiscriminate slaughter as well as mischief to the stock that such a wild mission occasions, and I ceased to load my rifle. On seeing this Mr. Drax cried out to me, that we had not yet killed as many as last year, therefore to "go on." On this I replied, "Do you forget that you have just thrown into the park an immense extent of additional land? What is it for, unless you increase the herd?" I think he said something about "buffaloes or kangaroos," but we did not kill many more.

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[1] Perhaps there is no commoner misconception of the nature of the growth of a tree than is implied in the term "tap-root." Seedlings depend on their tap-root to get a hold of the ground and to penetrate to such a depth as shall secure the root-fibres from drought. But once that is accomplished, the tap-root does not continue to penetrate downwards unless there happens to be a store of nutriment below. The roots spread in every direction except, as a rule, downwards, and the whole subterranean structure of a mighty oak is often within three feet of the surface. —Ed.

While Mr. Drax was in Paris he commissioned me to kill the venison that was wanted, and I took a great deal of trouble not to disturb the park, delighted with the sport, and resolved to take as much care of the herd as if it was my own. Another grand mistake at Charborough was in the never killing any does; by this omission the park became filled with rubbish—with very old does and weak young deer, instead of keeping a large head of valuable male stock. Very old does injure the male stock much; past breeding, they never let the bucks be at rest, but prolong the season beyond its usual or useful limits. In the economy of parks, neither stag nor buck should, either for ornament or use, be permitted to live after a certain age; yet I have seen, in Charborough Park, red and fallow deer "gone back" in head so much, that all idea of their age was out of the question: all I could say was, that they were very old deer "worsted" from age, which ought to have been killed in previous seasons. I have horns in my hall, of both red and fallow deer, that, apart from the figure of the animal, would puzzle any man. The does at Charborough for venison, as well as the bucks, are beautiful, and a more lovely park was never attached to a mansion. I have also killed as fine "avers" there as any alderman would wish to sit down to, and have had reason to be well pleased with the kind and liberal way in which Mr. Drax gave me the amusement. A well-managed park ought to supply the table of its owner all the year round with fat venison. Commencing in July, the bucks are good till October. The "avers" then come in till the does are ready, say till about the end of November. The does will last till January, and then the "avers" come in again till the end of April, when bucks, stall fed, are fat; and then stall-fed deer will last till the grass bucks are again in condition. I call the man good in the graceful art of woodcraft, who can tell in a herd of fifty the best dry doe with or without the aid of a glass.

From the 17th of December to the 30th of August 1853, with my bloodhound Druid, I have found forty-eight deer in the New Forest, attending the hound on foot, sometimes commencing at ten in the morning, and not concluding till four, or six, or seven in the afternoon. One of these chases lasted seven hours, many of them two, three, four, and five hours; and out of these forty-eight deer so hunted, I have been up at the end to shoot the deer in forty-two instances. In two other instances the hound drove the deer from the forest, and killed one of them in the manors by himself—I lost his tongue owing to the wind; the other he hunted into the manor near Ringwood, and was followed by two of my men, who having Baron the gaze-hound in a leash, slipped him at a view, and he pulled down the deer. Thus I accounted for forty-four out of forty-eight deer; and when it is considered that the forest consists of upwards of sixty thousand acres, and that the deer have a power to range the whole of it if they please, and that I followed the hound on foot, my brother sportsmen in the highlands and old friend Mr. Horatio Ross, whom I am sorry to say I have not seen for years, will admit that, as portrayed by Landseer in one of his pictures, "There was life in the old dog yet"—there still is a step or two left in me.

In concluding these Reminiscences, I cannot do so without a short notice of bonnie Scotland; that region of mist and mystery, mountain and moving flood. Though its sports on forest, loch, and river have often been eulogised by writers well versed in their wild variety, yet it is not unbecoming in me to glance at scenes in which I have shared with so much pleasure. In the Lowlands of Stranraer, on Lord Stair's domains, I have killed the moor game, pheasant and partridge, and the perch, pike, and trout of its lakes and streams. At Dall, in the western Highlands, on the banks of Loch Rannoch, and in the Black Wood, I have done the same; and though last not least, with Lord Malmsbury I have trod the magnificent mountains of Lochiel, stalked the wild stag, or waited for him in the passes of the forest.

It is the fashion of the English tourist to roam abroad, to rush down the Rhine, "going foreign" in search of sights and scenery, and to rave of the picturesque; while at the same time those very pleasure-seekers, in all probability, have never seen the views of the Wye, or sailed from Glasgow through the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. From the rapidity of transit in late years, numbers numberless of the Southrons have seen the northern prospect in the sunny months of summer, when the mountain, free from mist, has reared its shoulder to the skies clothed in rich purple bloom, while at its foot the woods were verdant in bright contrasting greens; but few of these summer visitors, sportsmen and all, have remained, as I have done, till autumn's wand has ripened the blush of the berry, reddened the woods, bared the rock's brow, bid Nature don the russet garb, and changed her gentle sigh to the white squall which roars through the ravines, and almost lifts from the whirling eddies of the lake the row-boat of the fisherman. Though I love the Highlands in their summer garb, my admiration is deepened when I behold them preparing to meet the onset of winter, and observe them decked in such splendid hues of colour, light and shadow, that were a painter to depict them thus truthfully, fairer than any fiction, the *cognoscenti* of the Exhibition would denominate him a gaudy fool. In the woods of Lochiel, a part of the primeval or Caledonian forests, the pines are unequalled, save those of Mar, their roots twisted among the gigantic limbs of a perished race of oaks that once clothed the foot of the mountain. In October, and even in November, nothing can be more rich and warm than the tints of the mountain ash, the beech, the birch, the sycamore and oak. The golden hues of their leaves stand forth from the background of dark fir and heather, in the most marked contrast and variety of light and shade. At this season of the year, too, the mountain partially conceals her beauty in passing wreaths of mist, assuming a variety of forms; and, like the face of woman, the mountain dons a beam of sunshine; and, lifting her veil, smiles on admiring man with an effulgent brow, the more beautiful in that for a time it has been mysteriously concealed.

Alas! that I should be forced to descend from enraptured reminiscences of nature, to condemn the errors of a builder and to chronicle the faults of taste—to describe, in fact, the unpretending, unpoetical home of the Chief of the Camerons, of the Lochiel, the Highland proprietor lineally descended for eight hundred years, whose heritance is marked by centuries, and whose title-deed is a claymore. Alas! that, in describing his mansion, I can only say that the house, though a comfortable one, is stuck in a hole; in those four words I tell it all. So utterly dead to the beauties of Nature and accessible grandeur of situation were those who built it, that they have of a verity turned one of the chief features of the surrounding site into an enemy instead of a bounteous friend. A hole has been dug for the house on the River Arkeg, which rushes by within ten yards of its windows, till it falls into Loch Lochy; the torrent and waterfall so near, that with a bad view of it, it annoys with its noise, and in times of flood inundates the offices, which, like those of a house in London, are underground, and need nothing but an iron railing and a stuffed representation of a policeman looking down, either for love or duty, to render their cockneyism complete. Still, unhappily as the house is placed, much might be done to better its prospect; and I wonder that my old friend Lochiel (we were in the Guards at the same time), in conjunction with the good taste I know Lady Vere possesses, does not at least put the vicinity in order, and minister to it in the spirit of his famed and loyal ancestor—Sir Ewen Cameron, who, proud of the gifts of Nature, offered to bet that he would shoot a stag and kill a salmon from the window of his tower, on the banks of the Arkeg. At present a greenly painted iron fence, put up at great cost, keeps the deer away from the house, and wooden pales along the graceful and leaping river, if Naiads really existed, would make them need every drop of water from the fall to restore them from a fainting fit, the effects of mortal enormity. What has the lawn of Lochiel to do with flower-pots and flowers, or the entrance at his gate with barns or wooden sheds; or his grounds with little laurel bushes, or his lands with fences? While Loch Lochy, Glengarry, Loch Quoich, Knoidart, and Cameron of Morar, MacLean of Ardgour, and the Caledonian Canal, which form his natural boundary, are "to the fore," they are the only limits by which his steps should be guided, and he should have no other bounds than "the march" he shares with them. Flowers! the blossoms of the mountain heather are his roses; his waterfalls and cataracts his singing birds; and the stag and the various denizens of his wilds maintain the hospitality of his larder.

There is a situation on which the house might have been built, on the opposite side of the river, its windows to the south; and availing itself of the avenue of trees, whence might have been enjoyed the view of both lakes, the waterfall and river; and it then would have commanded the whole of the little valley between the hills. Yesterday, the 6th of November 1853, I crossed the lesser fall, and climbed to the island, and sat for some time on a rock close on the brink of the cataract; summoned the spirits around me—dreamed that I was Lochiel—and reformed the whole state of things before it was time to dress for dinner. Dinner! that necessity recalls me from the land of clouds and spirits, and bids me write in more histrionic style.

As a deer forest, this is essentially one of hinds, and not enough has been done by the proprietor to make it anything like a first-rate scene for the rifle. It consists, too, but of one side of a hill, is only two miles wide, and, on that account, but for the woods at the foot of the mountain, running down to Loch Arkeg, would be of very little value, inasmuch as the sheep and shepherds on one side are for ever disturbing the forest by a very natural trespass.[1] Lord Malmsbury has done his best in the vicinity of Ben Vain, by a fence, to keep the sheep out; but as the fence extends but a short distance compared with the extent of the mountain, the forest cannot be sufficiently protected. There is also a peculiarity in this forest which is heart-breaking to the sporting tenant who endeavours to increase the number of deer; and that is the fact, that the young male deer, those that I should call the sorels and sors, or the three and four-year-old male deer, invariably migrate to other mountains. This has been proved in the last ten years, during which Lord Malmsbury has rented Achnacarry, by his having marked more than thirty individuals, only one of whom has ever been seen again. The woods which shelter the deer are also every year deteriorating, from what seems to me to be an injudicious felling of some of the most beautiful pines in improper places. I observe that wherever, on the hill-sides, the factor has caused the timber to be cut, the wind rushes in and completes the destruction. As many a gallant Cameron, while fighting for his prince, has fallen when the tide of war broke his ranks, and prevented the clan from standing shoulder to shoulder; so do these primeval trees, when thinned, sink before the blast that, jointly, they had defied for centuries. In the indiscriminate and too extensive burning of the heather the interests of the tenant of the mansion are not fairly considered; and I have observed such wide tracts of heath consumed, that I am perfectly sure that not only has it been done to an extent inimical to deer and game, but even to the flocks of sheep. I presume that the heather on these mountains, after being burnt, does not reach perfection again for a period of full fifteen years; and if I am right in that assumption, the conflagrations having been so widely extended, although more food is produced, the benefit of that food is considerably lessened by the absence of all shelter; shelter, and a certain amount of warmth being necessary, as we all know, to the increase and condition of sheep as well as cattle. There is, also, another nuisance to the preserver of deer and game on these mountains permitted to exist, that with great advantage might be got rid of. This nuisance arises from an unlimited permission being given to a man known as a fox- or "tod-hunter," who keeps from twenty to thirty curs and dogs of all sorts—a dog for everything, in fact—who roams these hills, deer forest and all, gun in hand, for the alleged purpose of destroying vermin, under the influence of whisky, and ripe, in conjunction with some of the shepherds, for a shot or a run at anything that may start before him. Now, were I Lochiel, I would order my gamekeepers sedulously to destroy the foxes, quietly and most efficiently by trap and poison (dear reader, remember there are no hounds here), and the tenants, too, should be requested to permit their shepherds to put their shoulders to the wheel, to rid the lambs of their enemy, without calling for extraneous assistance. Half his life the shepherd basks, blinking idly in the sun on the mountain side, or sits doing nothing in the sheltered corner of a rock; or very frequently amuses himself with finding a deer lying in some corrie accessible to the gun, for which he hies back to his cottage. Now, if these worthies were directed, in their idle hours, being on the spot, to trap the foxes, and a few traps assigned them, the "tod-hunter" might be dispensed with. I admit that the sort of trap they must use is dangerous in dishonest hands, where there are blue hares and winged game, still I think that, though it might demand a little more vigilance in the keepers, yet, the interests of the deer forest, which, after all, are the chief thing, would be better maintained. At all events, an irresponsible intruder, guns, dogs, and noise, would be got rid of; and every one knows what a boon that would be to the deer on the wild mountains of Lochiel.

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[1] Since these lines were written the limits of Achnacarry forest have been greatly extended, and stretch along both sides of Loch Arkeg as far as the marches of Knoidart and Glen Quoich.—Ed.

The time has arrived—I am about to assert a curious fact, and one which those blind revolutionists and hazardous reformers (I speak in sense parliamentary), Messrs. Cobden, Bright, Charles Villiers, and Sir William Molesworth, might not have been prepared for—when machinery has made the wild stag of the Highlands of more value than the sheep; and, hear it, ye disciples of the Manchester school, who, while you preach the disbanding of the public soldier, yet are the first to call for his protection; and who find yourselves obliged to shoot, by private hands, your own refractory turn-outs at your mills and coal-pits, as at this moment at Wigan, the wild stag is affording more employment to the surrounding or local labouring population than the flocks of sheep. Over ground that would have maintained but one shepherd, on its being turned into a deer forest, ten men are employed in the shape of keepers, assistants, and gillies. Here, close to Achnacarry, whence I write this portion of my Reminiscences, there are two new forests already made, and, *thanks to the power of machinery*, the deer and the game have become the most lucrative property of the Highland laird. Where is all this to end? If steam brings tenants who will give treble the rent for these wild hills for the maintenance of deer that farmers can afford to do for the production of sheep, and, looking south, a less breadth of wheat is sown, under what is erroneously called free trade, than used to be under protective enactments; if war spreads—thanks to Lord Aberdeen's timid policy, it *does* exist—how is the population to be fed? As a politician, I feel as if Manchester, conjointly with Lord John Russell, had flung me into the eddies of Lochiel's waterfall, and I am twisting round and round, I know not whither. Prices are infinitely higher than I expected they would be under free trade, and have been lower than the Whigs and Lord John Russell bargained for; and it is evident enough, that not only were we all wrong, I fear to a terrible extent, in our speculations as to the effect of the measure, but at this moment we, none of us, politically speaking, know where we are, what will be the state of the country, or where we may be next year,—Lord John Russell and his tutors, Messrs. Cobden and Bright, having won for themselves the disagreeable position of being forced to admit that their object has signally failed, and that they have unhinged the great wheel of trade without obtaining cheap food for the people. Thus much in passing; but, as I am not writing a political treatise, now to the mountains again; wild though they are, not much more wild than the political game at present in the ascendant.

On this territory of the Lochiel, I have found it at times a difficult task to keep my mind on sporting interests and incidents, so full are the features of the landscape of legend and romance. While fishing on Loch Arkike, as it is spelt in the curious

*Memoirs of Sir Ewen Cameron*, every time I turned my head I saw the ruins of a little tower on an island where he confined three colonels of the English army, who had been sent by General Monk to inspect the Highland garrisons and fortifications, and who had been surprised by Sir Ewen, in conjunction with M'Naghtan, at the little village of Portuchrekine, on the sea-side, about four miles from Inveraray, and taken prisoners. The water on Loch Arkeg, I am told, never entirely freezes; and it is of excellent quality for all useful purposes. The fish that frequent its depths and shallows are the salmon, the salmo ferox, or great lake trout, and the sea and fresh-water trout, the char and the eel. I came to Achnacarry in a storm; the gale having assisted to propel the old steam tub that brought me, as well as to amuse me—Heaven knows I needed it—on the voyage from Greenock, by showing the rocky promontories of the Highland isles lashed by an angry sea. Weather never interferes with my personal comfort on board ship, save as it renders my fellow-passengers more or less agreeable. The same storm that brought me to the Highlands continued in its reign and rain without intermission for eight days; so that with the exception of an hour or two, it was almost useless to take gun or rifle in hand. We did, however, seek all sorts of game; and when the rain came down in torrents, rather than do nothing, I tried the lake. The burns being swelled, as well as from other causes, small trout for bait were scarce; so, having salted some dace, and brought them with me, I spun those in the hope of tempting the "salmo ferox," but in vain, the triumph was kept for the artificial pectoral fin gudgeon, or minnow as it more decidedly represents, and to this I had a rise. My gillie was pulling the boat when the fish seized the bait, and at once it was evident that a mighty customer tried the line; having checked him a little, to ensure the hold of the hooks, ere he descended into the depths of the lake, he gave the water a lash with his tail that at once denoted his size; and at it we went, winding up and running out for upwards of three-quarters of an hour. I dared not land to play him for fear of the rocks and sunken trees, and so strong and resolute was the fish, that he would not let himself be lifted to the light till the three-quarters of an hour had expired, soon after which we gaffed him into the boat, where the purple monster broke one or two of my hooks before, with the hammer belonging to my rifle, I could give him the *coup de grâce.* Had I killed this fine specimen of the fish in earlier season, he would not have been a fraction under twenty pounds; the servants weighed him in my absence, and said that in his present condition he was but fourteen. Lord Malmsbury pronounced him the largest fish that had been caught for ten years, and sent him to be stuffed, as a perfect specimen of the great lake trout.[1] In the little time that I had to fish in these waters, it was evident that the artificial pectoral fin minnow made of horn, was the best of all baits,[2] and with it I killed several of the salmo ferox, as well as the sea and common trout, but none of them, save the monster described, above four or five pounds.

Setting all sports aside, the lover of nature is well repaid for his long and tedious journey in reaching these wilds—these lands of rich lights and shadows; for there is scarce a change in the day, or in his position, that does not offer to his observation some fresh beauty. Wild, wet and cold though the day was, our drive after the monster stag of Corrie Vortght disclosed to me much to admire. Having mounted our ponies, Lord Malmsbury, Lord Edward Thynne, Mr. Dashwood and myself began to ascend the foot of the hills on the side of Loch Lochy; for we had to make a long detour to approach the sacred precincts of the king of the waste, who had chosen this extraordinary corrie as the place of his resort; and new to the locality as I was, my eyes were as often turned to look at the opening prospects behind and around me, as they were to mind the dangerous nature of the path. Beyond us and to the left, towering above his subject mountains, Ben Nevis reared his monarch brow, crowned with a diadem of snow, and bearing to heaven that mysteriously awful sign of the cross by which he is known to the eyes of strangers; the cross that, though on the mountain only traced in snow, is impervious to the beams of the summer sun; and reigns through summer and winter, a living imperishable emblem of that which in the lighter as well as the heavier hour, man would do well never to forget. Strange, mysteriously magnificent to my mind, that holy symbol on the brow of Ben Nevis assuredly is; unassailed by rain, and indissoluble by the sun, it is, even in surrounding snows, for ever confessed, and so strangely true, that the wondering eye can trace in its unsullied hues the lines of an extended figure. In winter whiter in its whiteness, and in summer still more purely cold and exact, when all surrounding vegetation starts to life.

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[1] Far larger trout have been killed of late years in Loch Arkeg. I landed one of 17½ lbs., and my brother-in-law, Mr. Johnston Stewart of Physgill, one of 23 lbs.—Ed.

[2] This does not coincide with my experince. The most successful bait I have found to be a burn trout of about four ounces in weight.—Ed.

Our path wound for a long distance through scanty birch trees, and along a precipitous side of a rocky burn into which one slip of our sure-footed ponies would have sent us, never more to hunt the mountain deer; but, no such accident happening, we crested the range of hill, one side of which forms the forest, and, having walked and ridden, we attained the short down-like grass or moss which carpets the brow of Ben Vain, and saw the wire fence put up by Lord Malmsbury to protect that part of the forest from the intrusion of sheep. John Stuart, the head forester, here left us, and, kneeling down at a beautiful spring which crests the very summit of the mountain, never dry in summer nor frozen in winter, began unceremoniously to lose time, gathering and eating the curious little cress that grows on the margin of the spring. Stuart, I found, had been assured by a Highland Esculapius that, "as long as he could *daily* eat this cress, he would never die." The doctor was, in my opinion, a wag, because none but a man possessed of such limbs, activity, and stoutness as Stuart boasts, could attain to that spring every day; therefore, if he had strength to reach the site of the spring, little, save some accidental or violent means, could have put him from the world. Stuart, having refreshed himself and guarded against death, a halt was called, and he was despatched to the head of the quarry to glass the deer. He soon returned, saying the great hart lay beneath a craig, in an excellent position for the drive. A dangerous thing, in my opinion, was then done; taking every precaution to sink the hill a little, we all passed to windward of the corrie; indeed, we could not gain the passes up which the deer were expected to ascend without doing so. True! we put the brow of the mountain between us and the corrie; true! the stag lay perhaps several hundred or a thousand feet below on the other side of the mountain; nevertheless, in these Highland passes, deep corries and glens, the wind, as if it was water, dips and twists in all manner of eddies, and, whatever be the stalker's position above or below the deer, if he is in the least degree to windward, he is never safe from detection and consequent defeat. Having thus passed the corrie, and gained a position better suited to the direction of the blast, Lord Malmsbury having chosen the pass at which he would stand, we drew lots for the others. I have no luck, and never win a draw or toss; so, what was deemed by those who drew with me the most ineligible situation of course became mine. The mountain's brow was left as my position, exposed to the bitter wind and rain, without the vestige of a stone large enough for shelter, with the space of two hours to wait for the posting of the other guns before the commencement of the drive. This time, however, ill as the wind was, it brought me luck; for, on the lower and more sheltered passes being selected, Lord Malmsbury, as well as John Stuart, told me that mine was the likeliest post for a shot of all. I did not mind the weather then! so, spreading my plaid to lie on, I couched among small grey stones, and watched the sky-line for the first appearance of the drivers. I saw them, at first not larger, to all appearance, than blackcocks, and then they descended into the quarry. How eagerly I watched for the monster's horns to appear above the edge of the precipice can only be known to a sportsman; but, alas! the whistle of a blackcock's wing, or the alarm note of an old cock grouse, was all I saw or heard; *the stag was not in the quarry,* and, for the hundredth time, had mysteriously eluded his pursuers. Only once was this stag in a position for stalking, and that was in this corrie; then Lord Malmsbury very nearly got to within rifle distance, but, alas! to the stag a friendly roe-deer bounded up and warned of the danger, and the stalk in consequence was defeated. The warning note of a grouse, the run of a hare, the bound of a roe, or the flight of black-game, or even the trot of a sheep, are each sufficient to communicate danger to the deer, and, without stopping to inquire why these creatures move, the stag avails himself of the hint and flies to distant hills.

It is obvious to me that if this "monster stag of Corrie Vortght" eludes the rifle much longer, the Highlanders will give him up as a myth or magical impossibility, and liken him to "the great or awfu' stag of Gusa," who, in the mountains of Lochiel, is said to have reformed the wicked shepherd. The shepherd was a lawless fellow, and among other delinquencies killed the deer, and, when remonstrated with by better-disposed people, he vauntingly replied, "that, if the devil himself was to forbid it, he still would have his share of the deer; for, in his opinion, he had as good a right to them as any Cameron in the world." The day after this hardened declaration he was out as usual tending the sheep, and narrowly scanning every spot that might contain a stag. The day was gloomy, gusts of wind seemed to come from all quarters of the sky, and the voices of tempests were heard roaring through the distant corries, though their force was not felt in the vicinity of this daring man. "Hoot!" he cried, as the wind whistled among the craigs of Corrie Glass, "the mountain maks a din as if for a drap o' whuskey." Well! the day wore on without his seeing a deer, when, suddenly, in a dell situated conveniently for a stalk, and not more than two hundred yards from him, he beheld a mighty stag; he was feeding quietly, and there was yet light enough to discern that on one horn he numbered fourteen points, while the other was but one tall straight shank, with a brow antler, like the heads of the deer of Knoidart. Strange sight as this was, it only added to the shepherd's desire to kill the deer; so, pulling forth his gun, he put it together, and, creeping on his hands and knees, soon reached a small knoll, on the other side of which, and within ten yards of it, he knew the stag to be feeding. Peering through the heather, the extraordinary horns, still at their feed, appeared close to him; so, raising himself gently on one knee, he aimed his gun, and was about to fire, but scarcely had his finger begun to feel for the trigger when up went the head of the stag, the eyes bent full on him, but ere he could discharge his gun, to his horror instead of at a deer he found himself aiming at the heart of a tall dark man, with flames playing about his head, who, clenching his fist in a threatening attitude, dared him to fire. Down went the shepherd in a swoon; when he came to himself he found his gun was broken in two. Late it was that night ere he reached his cot. Whisky and gun alike abandoned, he was never after known to swear, and, so sedate and thoughtful had his reformation made him, that to the end of his days he was alluded to as "the man that winna smile."

I was surprised to find in these enlightened days, and particularly among Scotsmen, who are usually well educated, the amount of superstition in the Highlands still existing. If some foresters, when going out deer-stalking, meet an old woman with nothing on her head and feet, they pronounce her a witch, and give up the sport of the day as hopeless; having crossed her path is a fact of ill luck, rendering all human skill in vain. It is a peculiarly unfortunate thing, this idea of theirs, because, if you do meet an old woman, she is sure to be so denuded; and the chances, therefore, are very much against you. If a blue hare appears, and ceases from her very odd and elfish-looking flight to sit up on her hinder-legs on the sky-line, or anywhere else, to muse on those who have alarmed her, that also is enough to make some foolish Highlanders deem that all luck for the time is over. Indeed, I know an instance of superstition still more ridiculous in the eyes of a sensible man. A friend of mine missed his forester from behind him, and, on looking back, discovered him on his knees, busy with his hands in tearing up the ground. On asking why he did not come on, the forester seriously assured him "that he had seen a mouse, and, if he did not catch her and get her blood, they should kill no deer that day." If by accident you put up a blue hare, and she muses over you, some foresters would risk the disturbing of the whole stalk, by asking you to kill the hare, rather than attempt the sport of stalking without her blood.

The knowledge that such ridiculous superstitions exist makes me loth to trust the conduct of a day's stalk to any man so possessed. Indeed, I think that half the pleasure consists in stalking for a shot yourself. If you are simply to follow the steps of a conductor, there is no interest to sustain you against fatigue, and I feel myself when so situated walking mechanically, and my mind far away thinking of other matters. I walk, in short, with somebody else's legs, and depend on another man's eyes, and, of course, am proportionately dissatisfied with him if he fails in bringing me up to a deer. What I should like best would be to have a young and zealous boy with me to look out for the deer and show me the ground, and then leave me alone to prosecute the endeavour. Nothing can make me believe that it is not easier for one man to approach a wild deer than for three, accompanied by a brace of greyhounds; but, on expressing this opinion to Stuart, he replied, "No; the same thing would conceal us all." So the same cover might in easy hills, when you approached the deer behind a rise of the heather, wind and all things suiting, but not when you had to pass spots in bird's-eye view of the deer, or to mount a sky-line, or, what is just as bad, pass the water line along the margin of a lake with the deer in sight above you. The ill luck which usually attends me made itself peculiarly manifest on the day on which I went for a stalk in the wood of Gusa. Having ordered myself to be called between five and six, two gillies rowed me up the lake at dark, before a storm of wind from the east that, as I steered, made me think the little boat was running away with all of us, and gave me, as I kept her well before the wind, a very good idea of what might even have happened to us then, had I permitted her to turn her broadside to the weather. Having reached Stuart's house, we proceeded to wait for a stag who usually in a morning fed out of the wood in that vicinity. However, the stag declined to show himself, and, it having become broad daylight, I returned to the cottage and discussed the viands brought for my breakfast. The wind steadily blowing due east, we then set out to reach the farthest end of the ground allotted for my stalk, and, having reached a place where Stuart usually glassed the ground, we made out a large stag, in company with some hinds, close under Corrie Glass. The size of the stag was scarce determined when, to our dismay, the wind jumped (for it took no time to shift), and blew determinately due west, with an occasional southing in it, which added to our difficulties, and made the entire travel and previous arrangement for the day useless. We consulted what we were to do, and, at last, Stuart ruled that the only chance of approaching the stag was to ascend the precipice of the quarry and to get above him, and then try to find out some draft or local current of air that would not reveal our presence. We set about this, and here I must blame Stuart's want of caution. In proceeding towards the corrie, he neglected with his glass to clear the ground before us, and, consequently, we ran into several stags and put them off more than one place in which, bad as the wind was, they were accessible. Having ascended the corrie, this happened again, and we again put off a stag that, seen in time, we might have got at. I was following in the steps of my stalker, and had nothing to do with this, and therefore no one to blame but him; and, alas! when we got to the craigs above the stag we were trying to approach, and Stuart was viewing the ground, the uneasy trotting about in a small space of the hinds convinced us that they had our wind, and, though they could not just then fix our whereabout, all hope of getting to the stag was vain. Having given up all idea of this stag, we sought the upper side of the wood of Gusa, and very soon made out another. Having descended and obtained, as

Stuart thought, the wind of him, we tried to get at him, but again in vain; when we made him out, he and his hinds were restless, and, on approaching his locality, he had vanished. We then gave the whole affair up; it was blowing and raining torrents, and, having sought the margin of Loch Arkeg, we were on our return home when I thought, on glancing up the side of the hill, that I could see a deer. Stuart directed his glass, but declared there were none there; when his son, Donald Stuart, as quick and intelligent a youth as I wish to see, asserted that he could see a stag and hinds, and that the stag was a very large one and lying down; and all this with the naked eye. His father, so directed, then made them out, and we once more prepared to stalk them. They with the stag were lying on the side of the mountain in the wood above us, and were visible, as I said before, to Donald without the glass, and, *therefore*, we must have been, had they looked at us, as visible to them. When we commenced the stalk, however, the stag was lying down very quietly, and there was no possibility of his gaining our wind, so Stuart led *along the water line* without stooping his tall form or bidding us to stoop—a thing that, had I been stalking, I should on no account have attempted; I should have crawled on my hands and knees beneath the bank, and have escaped the notice of the deer above me. The wind was right for this attempt in every possible way; for, while we were down-wind of the stag, it roared through the trees so much as to drown any accidental noise in our approach. On we crept, after we had passed the water line, cautiously enough. We at last came to the spot where the stag had made his lair; he was gone, and from his lair I looked down on the lake, and saw the mistake that had been committed; when we walked the water line in an erect position, the stag must have seen us all. I reached Achnacarry at half-past seven, after a hard day, having seen seventeen male deer, seven of whom had magnificent heads, and were strangers from neighbouring forests; four of them, to use Stuart's expression, were "terrible deers," and larger than Lord Malmsbury had ever killed. For a day or two after this I became too ill to stalk deer, and Lord Malmsbury went to Gusa and the mountains beyond. Here he saw a fine stag, who was pointed out by Donald Stuart, known to his foresters as "the great cart-wheel deer," from his horns forming almost a circle, and nearly meeting at the top. This stag had not been seen by the keepers for two years, and was not one of those I saw, when, after a long and most difficult stalk, as the stag was not stationary but fed on, Lord Malmsbury killed him, giving to his gun fourteen stags out of sixteen shots, a success which, if equalled, cannot be surpassed, and adding to the halls and rooms at Achnacarry a head to cut down almost all, if not all, the other trophies.

There are plenty of black-game, grouse, ptarmigan, partridges, blue hares, and roe-deer on these hills, which have increased under Lord Malmsbury's rule, and I was much pleased with the gamekeeper Scott, with his intelligence, walking, and attention. Stuart's walking pleased me very much; when a younger man, being myself a good walker, I used to notice all who walked with me, but I do not remember one who could compare with John Stuart. Upright as a dart, his step not over long, though he stands more than six feet high, is quick, steady, and elastic, and capable of any distance or endurance. He walks over the face of slippery rocks, on the edge of precipices that would turn most heads giddy, with his hands as carelessly in his pockets as a man's might be who perambulated a gravel walk.

There is an abuse existing in the Highlands which, if those prone to it do not take care, will one day correct itself, and that to their decided loss. It is that if the foresters are natives of the place, if they detect a clansman poaching they will not "tell on him." It is a pity this, because it very naturally disinclines a gentleman to employ the local foresters in a charge for which he pays a very high rent; and if the native keepers or foresters do not take care they will find themselves superseded by strangers. I know that this practice exists over all the Highlands, and if I had it in my power I would caution the local population against the error, and teach them that, when in charge of a valuable property, it is as much their duty to punish a clansman who offends as to convict a stranger. Circumstances that have lately happened in the north, and indeed, the passage of every hour of our lives, ought to show to non-resident Highland landlords the boon which a good tenant confers on their domains, when for years he pays a high rent and employs a multitude of people, simply exercising just or tenant rights, and keeping up the place by living in it, without injuring anything belonging to his landlord, while at the same time he confers much benefit on the local or labouring poor.

I look upon the mountains and lakes of Lochiel as splendid, yet the deer forest, being, as I said before, essentially a hind forest, is not one of the first class for the exercise of the rifle; but it might be made better if the whole of the mountain, instead of half of it, was assigned to the deer, and better care taken in burning the heath and falling of timber. It is, however, a fine wild scene in which to sojourn, with sport enough to amuse the able and hardy, but not easily accessible to the fine gentleman or man who wishes to ignite a number of caps without much trouble. Adieu, then, to the territory of the Lochiel.

The printed Memoirs of Sir Ewen Cameron in the library at Achnacarry, under permission, of course, would afford matter for longer notice than this; and I need but raise my eyes from the library to Clune's Hill and the cave wherein Prince Charlie was so long concealed, or, farther on, to the mountain on whose rugged sides and summit I have shot ptarmigan, where, in a small niche, the remains of a mattress were found, supposed to have afforded rest to a claimant king, to ink my pen and sweeten invention with a dash of truth. Sufficient, however, for the present; that English Thane of letters, Longman, in my ear seems to cry his "Hold, enough," and my Reminiscences like a watch must be wound up and submitted to the public perusal.

# CHAPTER XX

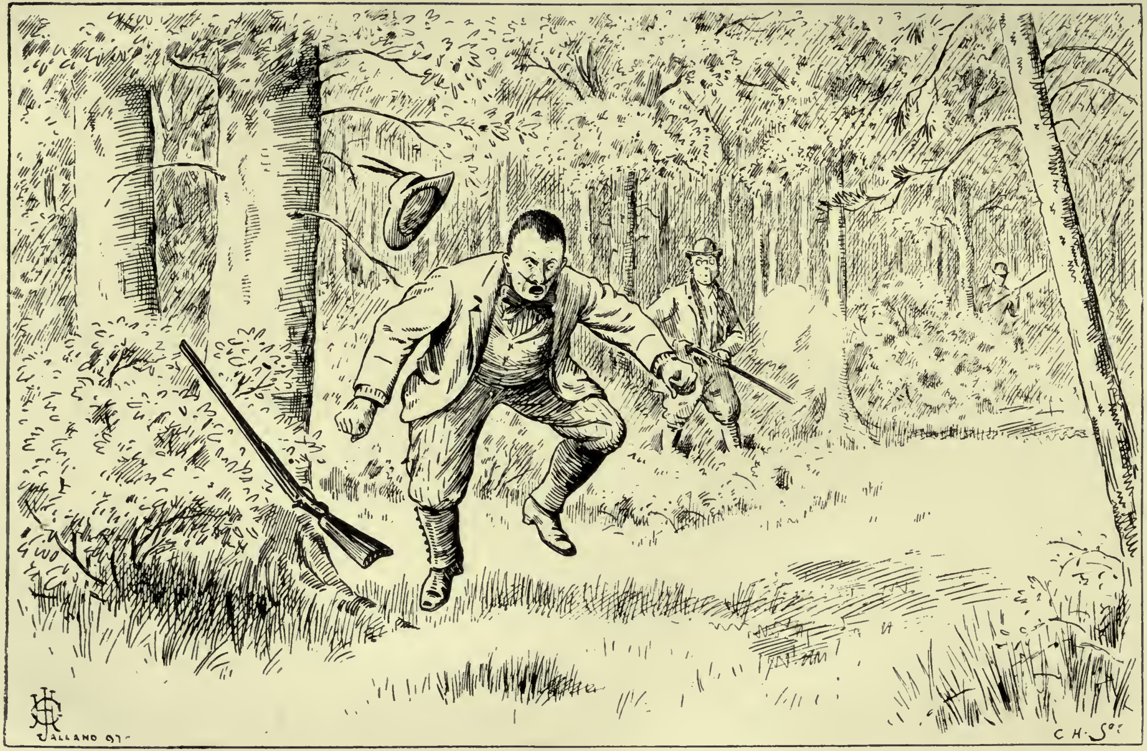
> "O Death, thy scythe hath not descended even,
> Where one unmitigated sinner falls,
> The young, the gentle, good, and fair are given,
> The blow that e'en the stoutest heart appals.
> If thy fell mission rests in heav'nly powers,
> Why not the weeds, instead of all the flowers?"
>
> *The Last of the New Forest Deer.*—G. F. B.

During the number of years that are included in these Reminiscences, it is extraordinary how few fatal, or even serious accidents have come under my immediate observation, whether from horse or gun. This is remarkable when the reader considers how many men go out hunting who have neither seat nor hand on horseback, and who are not aware of their danger, and therefore are, in a proportionate extreme, ignorantly daring. How many there are who appear on horseback whose very timidity and nervousness alone bring them into peril; and what numbers who force horses along who have no knowledge of the services required of them, or who, on good and well-trained horses, ride at each other in a resolution *not* to be "set" at a fence, and to set all others, *if they can*, or, as the phrase runs now, "to cut 'em all down." The steady or portly gentleman's rouse from a lethargic trot on a high road when his cob pitches on his nose, and in the struggle to right himself receives the fourth button of his rider's waistcoat on his ears, as said rider goes out of the saddle, on and off the horse's head to the flints or gravel beneath, is a thousand times more dangerous than when a steed hits the top bar of a stiff gate, and pitches his rider like a shuttlecock out of harm's way, and then pitchpoles, heels over head, beside him. One is a quick, frightful thing to look at, from the impetus of the horse and crack of the gate, but the slow, sack-like tumble of the other is a thousand times more serious. When a horse is fearlessly ridden by a resolute rider across a country, and over large, cramped, and dangerous places, the horse feels that he must take care of himself and of his rider too; and if they fall together there is no struggle that a gallant steed will not make to avoid hurting the man. Is it not delightful—perhaps the most delightful of all our violent pursuits—to feel oneself on a splendid hunter, of speed, of wind, docility, and daring resolution, activity and strength, with a good start, and well quit of the impediments, living and dead, or animate and inanimate, to "getting away," the hounds settled to the scent and together, and a few "cutters-down" around you taking lines of their own, with a fine line of country right ahead—the ear open to the cheering cry of the hounds, the heart in ecstasies, the eye scanning fence and field as they come, to select the lightest land and the most practicable leap, and the hand steady, full of ease yet firm, to time, aid, and rule the horse as best may suit his powers? Arched slightly is the horse's neck; he feels the rein, but does not pull an ounce; you cross a field full of deep grips, and at speed the horse and your hand so perfectly chime together that without a change of leg or labouring effort, every grip, each deep enough to have turned him over had he stepped in, is taken in one regular stride, increasing rather than diminishing the speed which devours distance. There is a bullfinch, or black-looking hedge that you cannot see through, coming; you *must* choose between it and the gate; you select that which you have a fancy for; and if it is the gate, you lessen your speed a little, not to over-pace the horse, and risk his getting either too near for a rise, or taking off too far from it; but if the bullfinch must be had, keep to your speed, or you won't get through with impetus enough to clear the ditch beyond. When resolutely ridden, the horse is aware, as soon as the rider, of what he has to do; and the instant the mind is made up, it is beautiful to feel between your knees the ample swell, or heave, of the round deep ribs beneath you, caused by the long breath the horse fetches, to catch his wind for the exertion. I have, on Brutus and Jack, felt a girth snap in the action, when I had not previously run my hand over them, to feel that they were not in the least too tight. A hedge is reached with the ditch to you, and neither you nor your horse expect anything on the other side; but at the moment of the spring, and while in the air, and about to land as you think, a second wide yawning ditch lies beneath. The gallant horse then must get out of the scrape in one of two ways; either you feel him expand as if he were flying, sending out his shoulders to such an extent that I have known Brutus and Jack snap their breastplates; or the horse, if he feels he can't thus cover the unexpected width, must drop his hinder-legs, and kick the bank with force enough to give him a second spring. I have known Brutus kick a hard-bound wattled hedge with his hinder-legs, and gain enough additional impetus to clear the second ditch; and once, over the River Brent, feeling that it was impossible to leap from bank to bank, he went in and out, striking the ground, luckily of gravel, with but a touch, as it were, of his hinder-legs, sending the water flying, but landing without a fall. To sit on a horse, and feel all this flying power and activity beneath you, is, I maintain, the most delightful sensation experienced in the noble science of horsemanship. To sit on a horse who is a good swimmer—their method of swimming is widely different; I had a little horse, called "Game Cock," who swam just as smoothly as a Newfoundland dog—is also a graceful thing; but if the rider has long legs, let him cross his stirrups over the pommel of the saddle, and while taking very good care to keep a firm and steadily-balanced seat, let him keep his feet forward. A man who is not so long in the leg, and who has, consequently, a shorter seat, need not take his feet out of the stirrups at all, but let him be sure to keep them in. If the horse is in a double rein, gather up the curb short enough to keep it from the fore-legs or much sway in the water, but not so much so as to let it be felt in the faintest degree; and in guiding him, let it all be done by a slight touch on either side the snaffle. If a horse is reined-in in the water, he can't swim, and most likely, by dropping his loins, will go backwards. I remember two ladies from Bletsoe calling on Mrs. Berkeley at Harrold Hall, just as I had come home from hunting, and was in my dressing-room, pulling off my boots. The earlier part of the morning had been very wet, but at mid-day it was fine. They were driving themselves in a one-horse phaeton. I was partly dressed—dressed all but my coat, neckcloth, and waistcoat—when, to my utter astonishment, I heard a horse at a gallop, and wheels race along the gravel walk beneath my window, where there was only a foot-way; this was succeeded by a smash against a tree towards the river in front, and then I ran down. The fact was, the hounds who had not been out had raised a cry at the return of their companions, and the horse taking fright, threw the ladies into a hedge, and turning his steps to my door, instead of stopping, kept his course over the lawn, knocked off the body of the phaeton against a tree, and plunged into the river, then in flood, with the harness, long reins, and shafts hanging to him, swimming down the stream, under the bridge, into deeper water, where there was no possibility of landing for a mile. When I reached the bank of the river the horse was swimming on towards Odell, and the stream so strong that there was no saying where the reins were; so I did not like to swim in that strong stream, among such hampering gear, but tore up pieces of turf, and pelted the nose of the horse, to try and turn him. In this I succeeded, and, when nearly exhausted, he turned against the stream. I soon made out the position of everything, and then swam in to his head. He was so frightened, that when I put my left hand on his mane, he neighed in my ear, as if in joy at my arrival; and my first action was to haul up the long reins, and fasten them to the rings, to prevent the action of the water on the bit. I patted, and encouraged, and hit him to greater exertion, for at first it was a toss-up who was strongest, he or the stream; but by dint of increased action he beat the current, and reached a gravelly shoal, on which I let him rest, and then, with a second struggle, landed him in the road at the foot of the bridge. The instant he was out of the water he set to kicking, and it was with the greatest difficulty that he was secured. At last I had the satisfaction of leading the old favourite beneath the windows, to assure the ladies of his safety; but either through cold, or a strain in his back and loins, he was ever after more or less affected.

Every animal can swim, of course, more or less; and many a life would have been saved from drowning if men, in moments of danger, had but remembered this fact, and, instead of parting company with their horse, held fast on to his mane. "Never desert the ship" is one of the most useful sayings on record, extending from the ship to the carriage when the horses are running away or restive, and to the horse in the water. The loss of the head, or rather of the use of the functions of the brain, in hours of peril, has proved as fatal as the cannon-ball; while, at the same time, the art of swimming has drowned as many people, perhaps, as it has saved. Still, every man should be able to swim, and should reserve that power as one to save from danger, and not exert it as an acquired amusement; for it is in the incautious use of it in dangerous places, and in fresh water where there are cold springs, inducing cramp, that the art and amusement of swimming leads to death. In the ornamental piece of water at Stoke Park, the keeper's son seized on a gentleman's horse, and rode it into the water, in an attempt to save one of my deer from the hounds. He was soon out of his depth, and not understanding horsemanship, he held fast on to the curb; the result of this was, that the horse began to get upright in the water, to paw in the same place, and would very soon have been backwards, when I cried out "to let his head go." The man's head was gone, and understanding nothing but the advice "to let go," he parted altogether with the horse, and, to my horror, disappeared, as he could not swim, over the horse's tail. All this time—for the struggle between horse and man lasted for a minute or two—his old father flung off his coat, waistcoat, and hat, and put them on again, as if he were practising how fast he could undress and dress himself, without stirring a step to help his son. There was an old punt, half-full of water, however, at the bank, and in this my brother Moreton pushed off, and saved the poor fellow's life: the horse, the moment his rider was quit of him, swam ashore, and landed with the utmost ease.

The only awful event I ever witnessed out hunting was during a run from Shelton Gorse. We had found, and were going beautifully away towards Stanwick Pastures, in Lord Fitzwilliam's country, the hounds settling to the scent, and carrying a good head, everything looking fair and well. I was on Captain, one of the horses I bought of Sir George Seymour, in the middle of the gorse when they went away, consequently the field had rather the start of me; but as he was a splendid horse through dirt, and just at first the hounds had to feel their way, I was coming up with the leading men hand over hand. Just as I gained a good place to "cheer 'em on," and see that the hounds were getting it by degrees all their own way, I cried out to Mr. Radcliffe, the brother of Mr. Delme Radcliffe, who was leading, "Hurra, my boy! hold you own; if the scent but holds, we shall soon drop into our places." I had not uttered this a moment, when, as we neared a small fence or young quick, over which we had to go, I just took my eyes from Mr. Radcliffe, then on my right, to look at the fence, and as I did so I was aware, as I thought, of a stumble on the part of his horse; but as in the commencement of that run, short as the time was over which it had then extended, I had seen a good many stumbles among the field, I took no further notice of it, and continued my course. We had a very good thing, but lost our fox. In the last cast I made for his recovery, in a gateway I met Mr. Montague Ongley, looking as pale as death, who asked "If I knew where there was a surgeon." I said, "No," and asked why? He replied, "Poor Radcliffe, I fear, is dead." His horse had made no stumble further than that caused by the fall of his rider on his neck, and before he reached the ground, life, from all accounts, became extinct.

A stray shot from my gun while I was at Harrold struck a girl slightly in the face, who was gleaning in another field; and I once lodged some shot in the hand and dress of a maid-servant at Cranford, who came in at a gate in the court-yard at the moment I shot a strange dog said to be mad, and the stones of the court-yard raising the shot, a portion of the charge struck her. The only serious accident I was near effecting was at Dall, in the Highlands of Scotland, while on a visit to Lord Grantley. We had been out black-game shooting, and our return home lay through the Black Wood, in which were many roe-deer. We had our rifles with us, and agreed to look for deer on separate lines on our way home. Lord Grantley was to take the shots to his right, and I was to do the same by those on the left, so as to avoid the risk of shooting each other. On coming near home I saw a roebuck feeding to my left in a little open glade, towards which I crept, but when within a long shot of him something scared the buck and he trotted off. It being the last chance of the day, I discharged my rifle at him; my horror may be more easily imagined than described, when up in the direct line of my ball sprang Lord Grantley, calling out loudly, and by his side were flourished two legs only, among the heather and fern. My bullet had hit the very stone behind which Lord Grantley had screened himself from the observation of the deer, on the face of which it flattened and split with such a whiz, as induced old MacGregor to aid his chance of safety by rolling over, and hence the startling appearance of the flourished legs! It was no fault of mine; the fact was Lord Grantley had reversed his position, having as he thought counted the discharge by the keepers of our guns at Dall, and enumerated among them the report of my rifle, and by that he arrived at the conclusion that I had gone home. No one the worse for it, we had a good laugh at MacGregor's roll, but it served as a caution for the future. I have been struck twice only by shot, once in the knee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SHOOTING A FRENCHMAN.

and once in the cheek, and in neither instance was the shooter in the least to blame. In the first instance my brother, Mr. Moreton Berkeley, killed a pheasant flying over an oak tree, and one shot striking either the bird or a bough, glanced downwards and hit my knee sufficiently to draw blood. In the other, Mr. Sansom, in Odell Wood, shot at a woodcock going over the copse, and a shot again glanced downwards and drew blood from my cheek, hitting me hard enough to have done mischief if it had touched the eye. If I go out with dangerous guns, it is my plan not only to take care of myself, but of them also, and to put or keep them in such positions, that they cannot injure their friends; and by this many accidents I am sure have been avoided.

The most amusing accident that ever was related to me, happened in the covers of a noble lord, who had invited a French diplomatist to shoot with him. The host was near-sighted, and shot in spectacles, while the guest, taking a hint from the garments in which in Paris artists love to depict John Bull, came dressed in white cords and very tight red leather gaiters. The woods were being driven, and the host and his guest stood against trees on the edge of the rides, within shot of each other, standing a little within the bushes to leave the ride open for a shot; and thus they stood for some time, ere the beaters or the game approached—long enough, it would appear, for the noble lord to forget the precise position of his friend.

Tired with waiting, and to amuse himself, or perhaps actuated by a little pardonable vanity, the Frenchman began to admire his gaiter, and to thrust forth the goodly limb, which the verge of the more open ride displayed to better advantage. The noble lord was aroused from his reverie by the appearance of something red on the edge of the cover, which he took for a hare, and as it appeared and disappeared occasionally, as the Frenchman changed the attitude, the host's spectacles were soon adjusted, and his gun levelled for the next appearance. Out came the leg again, bang went the gun, and with a shout the Frenchman sprang into view, with half-a-dozen shot lodged in the deceiving limb.

Men who are nervous and fidgety, and who on that account will not be still at places where they are desired to stand, are for ever getting into danger. A very good illustration of this was afforded by my worthy friend Mr. Minasi, who was always under the idea that he was likely to be shot. We were posted near each other once, in a wood at Spetchley Park, near Worcester, the property of my brother-in-law, Mr. Robert Berkeley, where there was a good deal of ground game. Having taken up our positions, although I kept sight of the oak tree under which I had left Mr. Minasi, on taking my place I called out to him to answer me, that I might still be the better assured of his locality, and received in reply the words "Here I am." Well assured of his position, I shot game each side of him, rattling the shot I have no doubt in his vicinity, but taking care that they went in a safe direction. I had just reloaded, and was on the point of firing again, when I heard the words, "Here I am," directly from the spot towards which my gun was levelled, and had they been uttered half a second later, I should to my horror have bagged my friend as well as the rabbit. Having told Mr. Minasi, then, "to keep where he was," the ground game again began tumbling all round him, and very soon after the words "Here I am" arose in a new place, and it was the greatest possible mercy that this nervousness and change of position had not led to a serious accident. Not long after this my friend, from some other hand, received a shot in the upper lip.

Spetchley is a beautiful place for game, combining first-rate pheasant, hare, and rabbit-shooting, with very good partridge-shooting; its park affords some excellent venison, and its little lake some wild-fowl. The best partridge-shooting I ever had was at Prestwood, the beautiful seat of Mr. John Foley, also in Worcestershire, than which I know not a more enjoyable place in the kingdom. It has around it a very handsome park, beautifully situated for deer, if it pleased its owner to have them, while at the same time there is water enough for wild-fowl and pike-fishing to any amount, provided its resources on that head were developed and nursed. I am perfectly convinced that the large piece of water, or sort of mill-lake that there is there, could be made an excellent decoy for wild-fowl for the gun. I shall never forget a day's pheasant-shooting at Prestwood on a beat wherein we had to shoot on small hills, on either side low places or valleys—a species of ground which always requires great care from the shooter, or he may hit his friend on the opposite side. Known as a safe hand with a gun, I was selected by my good friend to walk the dangerous line, but as luck would have it an accident did occur. Mr. Henry Foley was attended on that day by a little boy, the son of a labourer, to pick up and carry his game, when on the rise of a pheasant above as well as out of his line, I killed the pheasant, and at the same time cut off a young tree as thick as my arm, which had the effect of scattering the shot, some of them in oblique directions. My surprise was great, when I heard the cry of Mr. Henry Foley's boy at his heels, and saw him tumble backwards, exclaiming that he was a dead man, or something very like it. I could not cross the deep narrow valley just there, but I saw Mr. Foley run up, and with his son stand over and gaze on the boy. When I arrived, the boy's mouth was full of blood, he lay on his back, his hand a little raised towards his face, speechless, and making the most fearful contortions of countenance, his eyes steadily fixed on Mr. Foley's spectacles, the wearer of which had questioned him in vain. I could not make it out, there was an odd collected look about the boy which did not portend either pain or the approach of death, and yet he lay still in apparent convulsions of feature. A horrible pause was the consequence, when suddenly the finger and thumb of the raised and pausing hand went quickly to the bloody lips, and going in precisely as Jack Horner's digits did when he pulled out the plum, the hand returned towards the face of the anxious gazers, backed by the boy's grinningly proud exclamation of "Here a is," and held up to us, spectacles and all, *a shot.* The fact was, one shot had cut the lip of the boy, and stuck tightly between his teeth; the evolutions of his tongue and semblance of mastication arose in an endeavour to extract his enemy, causing him to lie speechlessly still, engendering in our minds the idea of convulsions and death. It is impossible to describe the effect that this sudden elucidation of the mystery had on us; all I know is that I laughed till my sides ached again, when on rewarding the boy with half-a-crown, he informed that excellent servant Beard, the head gamekeeper, that he would be similarly shot every day for half the sum.

## CHAPTER XXI

"And if he asks, what made thy heart
    Against its chains rebel,
Disguise no atom of the part
    That I have taken : mark me well !
I know my duty thus accords
A willing hand to back my words :
Then here I swear to set thee free ;
Away ! I care not who he be."

*The Last of the New Forest Deer.*—G. F. B.

Before concluding these Reminiscences, my readers will not be surprised if I touch on the relative positions of masters of hounds, and the old and good laws of honour which used, and ought still, to govern their conduct towards each other. The new regulations, in part brought about by the exertions and cant of those calling themselves the "Peace Society"—the consistency of whom may be judged of by the speech made by Mr. Cobden at the close of this last session of Parliament, 1853, on the Russian and Turkish question, so ably, so amply, so severely and beautifully answered by Lord Palmerston—have plunged the code of honour, that ought to be so useful and so binding, into innumerable difficulties in regard to many questions, trivial apparently in themselves, but carrying a vast deal of weight in the socialities of life. The abolition, or the attempted abolition of the duel has, I say, left the code of honour without any judgment-seat to appeal to ; for it is the most abject and drivelling nonsense to suppose that public opinion, or any sense of propriety, will rule the low and vile mind, and force an abstinence from wrong, any more than it will correct the pickpocket or restrain the burglar from entering the houses of unprotected old people. There are men whose minds are assailable to nothing save a wholesome sense of personal danger; and such men as these, be they of what rank they may, are but too happy, under the Peace Society, to free themselves from the only alternative that made them gentlemen, or kept them within the rules of courtesy. "Peace Society" is an exceedingly catching title, as it seems to enlist in its sphere each dove-like sentiment, religion, and Christian virtue—everything, in short, that is gentle or delightful; but I am perfectly convinced that the present state of society is just as fit to be freed from the possibility of the duel as our shores and seas are of our army and fleet, or as Turkey was from an army of five hundred thousand men. As long as there exists a warlike emperor or an ambitious nation, so long must England retain her forces; and in the same ratio so long as there exists a host of ungentlemanly-inclined minds or men, there must be, in matters over which the statute-book has no control, some way of keeping them in order, or society in the midst of progress and boasted increase of intelligence, Christianity, and civilisation will be deteriorated.

It has been one of the great faults of recent legislation, to take away an old system before a new code was well digested to fill up the vacancy, and to meet the fresh state of affairs so brought about. When the appeal to arms was decried, its peaceful advocates did not attempt to deny that certain abuses would have no actual remedy; so to meet the obvious error, they said that all personal quarrels, as well as national differences, should be "settled by arbitration." It is all very well to say "should be settled," but where is the power to force them to be so disposed of? Suppose the strong and muscular man insults, grossly insults, the weaker one, and in his own mind is well aware that an arbitration must go against him, is there any one weak enough to suppose that he would consent to such a reference? Society loses its short, sharp, and available hold over him in the abolition of the duel. In cases of insult, such as the one with which I am dealing, among gentlemen the error used to be met directly, and in the fairest way possible, and the gentleman insulted, and incapable of any other personal or muscular appeal, used to call the offender out, who then had to place his honour and future conduct in the hands of a friend, which friend or second, exclusively and without the possibility of an appeal from his principal, dictated to him what he should do; and where the second was a gentleman and a man of sense, it was hardly possible to attain the use of weapons.

I am speaking of the duel when governed by the true principles of honour, and in the hands of men who knew how to conduct it. Of course, there were many occasions in which its interests fell into ignorant hands, who turned it into a vulgar and often sanguinary brawl, or brought it into ridicule, in not carrying it out in extreme circumstances, *à outrance.* No man, no principal, should ever have been permitted to go out, receive his adversary's shot, and fire in the air. The fact of his firing in the air is an admission of his being in the wrong, and therefore his second should have acknowledged his error, have apologised for it, and not have let him appear on the ground. On the other hand, by communion with the opposing second, the friend of the man in the right, or the unjustly injured man, ought in all instances to have made himself aware whether or not the opponent intended the maintenance of the quarrel, or personal mischief; and if he did not do so, he should have refused to permit his principal to run the risk of butchering a fellow-creature in what, in that case, must be considered as in cold blood. Much of the mischief which, under the old code of honour, took place, or indeed all of it, was through the insufficiency of the seconds, and in their not treating their principals as the merest possible ciphers in all action, after the conduct of the affair had been assigned to them.

To such an extent was I, as well as others, convinced of this, that we in undertaking affairs of this sort invariably obtained a pledge, that before we consented to move in it our principal would solemnly bind himself to take no further part in the affair, save than by handling or otherwise, his pistol. Once in the hands of his friend, a man must abide by his dictation, consoling himself with the knowledge, that if he is not carried through the affair with flying colours, the blame attaches not to him: all he has to do is to be on the fighting side, and to be perfectly ready to shoot at, or be shot at for a week, if his second requires it. On five different occasions I have been appealed to, as second, in matters of this sort, and though on each of these events the principals on either side cared as little for the risk of their lives as any brave men need do, and Heaven knows, in more than one instance, were as hot and peppery as hasty tempers could render them; yet there was no appearance on the field, and the nicest law of honour was satisfied. In short, the man in the wrong was forced by the seconds to admit himself to be so, and the appeal to arms was avoided. Persons ignorant of the nice sense of honour which properly governed these things, and seeing the ridicule cast upon duels in playhouse representations and accounts of them published in the papers by foolish vain persons courting notoriety, raised a cry in condemnation, and gained a bad name for the possibility of an appeal to arms. I call it the possibility; for in well-managed matters the necessity for the risk of life very seldom occurred. Of course, at times there arose cases, where the quarrel originated in words or statements which had an equal appearance of truth, and which neither party could, by the seconds, be permitted to retract, and on these occasions the fight could not well be avoided; but when these cases happened, the parties were given very little time for deadly aim, for, as each principal might be said to have right on his side, the signal for the discharge of the pistols was so quickly given, that the probability was that no blood was drawn. In serious cases the principals were kept on the ground for two or three shots, or until one was hit, but the necessity for this seldom happened. That which militated most against the duel arose from the impossibility which the growth of trade occasioned, of defining who was or who was not a gentleman, and so confused at last did this definition become, that every man in an unscathed coat and trousers, who had no visible means of earning a livelihood, was deemed to come within the rule, and to be entitled to what was still called "satisfaction." I heard of a tailor talking to the gentleman who employed him of personal satisfaction, because his employer cast doubts on the justness of his charge; but looking very blue when the gentleman told him he should be delighted to let the settlement of the account be decided by an encounter. So lax had the code of honour become, and so censorious the world as to a man's declining to fight with any one on the score that he was not a gentleman, that although my conduct might, as a second, have been governed by a nicer discrimination, so far as I was concerned, and my second admitted it, I resolved to fight, if called on, with the sweeper of a street crossing, if dressed in his Sunday best. The affair in which I was engaged with a Dr. Maginn, since dead, being, at the time, matter of considerable publicity, I take this opportunity of alluding to it, the more so because I have for years seen such erroneous accounts of it given by the press, the last two recently in the *Irish Quarterly Review*, that if not noticed in its true colours, the wrong account of that meeting will gain an air of truth, the real cause of it and its miserable turpitude be lost, and the whole thing be handed down as a political quarrel got up, even according to the *Irish Quarterly*, by my opponents "in Mr. Fraser's back parlour, over brandy and water." I do not wish to expose the facts of the case, nor to have to deal with the reputations of the dead; but if I see any more eulogiums passed on those who did not deserve them, I shall be forced, though most reluctantly, to tell an unvarnished tale, and to expose the full extent to which a public reviewer *has it in his power* to abuse his public duty. The quarrel arose from no "political feeling," the review on the novel published by me, of *Berkeley Castle*, and which appeared in *Fraser's Magazine*, was written not *on the work* but *at me*, for reasons of which I have since become fully aware, and it needs but little more to make me tell them.

If there is to be no personal reference in matters that come not under the punishment of the statutes, what is to prevent any man from surreptitiously getting possession of a letter marked "private," and reading it, if it suits his purposes or his will, to the public? I do not think that any man has a right to write what he pleases to another, and then to suppose, if the contents of his letter, in justice to the community, demand publicity, that they will be withheld. The assumption that secrecy will be accorded in such a case is unwarrantable; and more, the receiver of such a communication would seriously commit himself if he assented to become the silent sharer of a dishonourable mystery. A man might communicate murder or robbery, and write above the information, "private and confidential"; but he who became possessed of the guilty knowledge is not bound to conceal it. In viewing this subject, it is not a mere abstract question, but the consequences of information so received, and the way in which the communication was got at, that must be considered. A revelation under the mark of privacy may, or may not, be justly deemed available to public knowledge, according to its nature. One of the secondary places where the absence of an appeal to arms is felt, is in the interests of our various hunting counties; and, as such, it becomes still more matter to be dealt with in the present Reminiscences. The old law among masters of hounds used to be, that when once the bounds of a hunting country were defined, no other master of hounds could hunt a cover within those limits, without the leave of the master in possession. By courtesy, the owners of the lands and woods could not give their possessions to a foreign hunt, although they could refuse to the master situated in their locality the run of them. If a foreign master of hounds accepted an invitation to enter the bounds of his neighbour's country, though on the invitation of individual proprietors, the master whose country was infringed on would have had a *casus belli*, in which every gentleman would have borne him out against the aggressor; and he could have turned the infringement of his bounds into a quarrel, in which his opponent would not have been permitted to have shot at him. One of the quarrels arising on the boundaries of respective hunting countries, in which I was called in to arbitrate, was that between Mr. Farquharson and Mr. Drax. In this quarrel, Mr. Farquharson decidedly threw the first stone, and was wrong; I say this at the same time that I bear for him the highest respect and esteem, as well as entertain the sincere hope that he will continue to hunt his country in the same liberal and effective way which he has done for forty years or more, for a lengthened period yet to come. He was in error thus:—He had hunted the old Charborough country, which might be termed a country within a country, and which was given up by the then existing Mr. Drax Grosvenor only until such time as one of the Drax family might desire to reclaim it. There was no male heir, and Mr. Sawbridge, now Mr. Drax, marrying his only daughter, representing the male head of the family, claimed it in right of his wife. The facts were on paper, so there was no gainsaying them; and there was no true ground of objection in the statement, that the present Mr. Drax did not come within the meaning of the terms under which the country came into Mr. Farquharson's possession. Therefore the country, as in the olden time defined, should have been at once rendered to the occupant of Charborough Park. Instead of this—other proprietors conceding theirs—Mr. Farquharson retained his own land, in which was situated a willow-bed, and drew the latter with his hounds. Mr. Drax, the first stone thus thrown, purchased an extensive estate in the heart of Mr. Farquharson's Vale country, called Holnest, drew what covers there were on it, and made a number of beautiful gorse covers, and thus entered into, and seized on, an extensive territory of right belonging to Mr. Farquharson; but of which Mr. Farquharson had no just right to complain, because he himself had been the first to infringe the rule laid down for all hunting countries. It was then proposed—at this moment I forget by whom—that Mr. Farquharson should restore to Mr. Drax the portion of the old Charborough country that had been retained by him, if Mr. Drax would resign the Holnest covers; but this was not a fair proposition. Mr. Drax had been at great trouble and expense in making new gorses, and when the proposal reached him he was in the condition to say, "No, you commenced these aggressions, and now you must give me in exchange as much as I have seized on, or we will each hold our own." I think this might have been done with advantage to both, and I had an interview with Mr. Farquharson, in an endeavour to effect it, but all in vain. Neither would yield an inch, and the false state of things continued till Mr. Drax's desire for the maintenance of his pack of hounds died away with the opposition which he had encountered.[1] The question then comes, Can Mr. Drax assign away this portion of the Vale country to any man who wishes to succeed him in hunting those acres? I say, decidedly not. It is only to the head of the Drax family that the country of right belongs, as stated in the agreement, and Mr. Drax cannot hand down the right which he, by virtue of a first aggression, has obtained in the Vale to a stranger; and if he yields the Charborough country, or ceases to hunt it himself, he is bound by that deed, and in courtesy, to surrender it to the former possessor, Mr. Farquharson, so long as he continues to keep his hounds. When Mr. Farquharson resigns his hounds —and heaven grant that that hour is far off—then if Mr. Drax survives him, or indeed whoever is the owner of Charborough Park, and the representative of that family, he can insist on the unfettered restoration of the Charborough country, and of right to hunt it, or assign it to whomsoever he pleases. Till that time, Mr. Drax himself ceasing to hunt it, Mr. Farquharson, to all intents and purposes, is in just possession. Mr. Farquharson is perfectly right in an idea I have known him promulgate, that in holding the hunting country he looked on himself as a sort of steward in possession, unable of himself to forego any portion of it. So far he is right, but this view of the matter does not prevent a temporary disposition of a part of his country under specific agreement, that a portion of it is so leased or conceded for a time, to be reclaimed again on due notice. On the contrary, viewing the matter in the light of a steward, a steward does well who makes the most of the acres entrusted to his care, and if by an exchange of lands the estate is benefited, a steward, with leave of the proprietor, is justified in the transaction. While I hunted Bedfordshire, I gave a portion of my country to the Hertfordshire as well as to the Cambridgeshire hounds; but it was on a distinct understanding that on due notice I could recall that permission, and that the permission was cancelled so far as I was concerned, when I gave up the hounds. I had nothing in exchange for it, but the country was not needed by me, and I felt too happy to have it in my power to assist my neighbour.

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[1] Although the Charborough hounds have been repeatedly advertised for sale, I believe they yet continue with Mr. Drax.

In these remarks I beg to say that I am not an advocate for the mere duel, I only assert that, unless there is the possibility of personal, and equal, and serious conflict, I know not how the rules of civilised society in field or hall are to be maintained. Brute force and the bully will be in the ascendant, for boxing does not put men on personal equality; and in all nice points of courtesy, and in things to which the statutes do not reach, the duel being abolished, nothing will be found to keep ill-conditioned men in order. To forbid the duel in the army or navy in the case of a quarrel between British officers, is quite right, they have an appeal to their comrades, and in extreme cases, a court-martial to fall back on; but to scout the *possibility* of it in society at large, is erroneous, and, in short, I do not fear to say, that there yet are cases in which men will appeal to it in spite of all that the Peace Society or Parliamentary constituencies can effect. *Used well*, a code of honour embracing the possibility of single combat, is invaluable; abused, it then degrades and dwindles into a sanguinary ruffianism, as brutal as it is useless, and hostile to the interests of society.

## CHAPTER XXII

"Come then, fair doe! hence home we'll traverse free:
  Upon my lawn no huntsman seeks thy life:
This forest land, from farthest south to sea,
  To all thy kind with more than danger's rife.
Away, then, home, sweet creature, come with me!
  Thy gentlest, best protector I will be.
She shook her head, and timidly referred
  To things that scared her; falsehoods, full of guile,
The most unfounded stories she had heard;
  Yet closer came she, with a trustful smile."

*The Last of the New Forest Deer.*—G. F. B.

In winding up these Reminiscences, and in speaking of my sporting inclinations yet existing, supposing that I had a domain of my own, I think that at my present time of life I should feel as much or more pleasure in rearing, taming, and taking care of birds and animals, and of affording them rest and enjoyment around me, than I should have in the active pursuit of their lives. Landseer's beautiful picture of "The Forester's Family" should have a living illustration at my door; where, though I might still kill the fat stag or buck at the right season, as well as the "yeld hind," or "dry doe," and the "aver," or "hevier," as it is vulgarly called, between the seasons of the male and female deer, still my chief amusement and pursuit would be in nursing and rearing heaven's creatures, rather than in their chase and destruction; and when age had come upon me, if given the blessing of a gradual descent into the grave, I would be found in my white hairs and faded limbs still poring over the beautiful mysteries of animal life, the economy of flowers, and of the fossil world, which latter as yet proves that but little of the true history of the earliest state of the universe has been handed down to man.

In advising not only the rising generation of sportsmen I would also counsel many of my seniors, to leave off the exciting pursuit of animals on foot or on horseback when they feel their nerves as well as their tempers failing them. Really, some men of my acquaintance make the pursuit of pleasure, for they do not get it, a trouble to themselves and a terror to their dependants, as well as an uncomfortable scene to their friends who happen to be with them. They ride or shoot in an irritable frenzy, under which it is impossible for them to be happy, while their horses and dogs, as well as their servants, are spurred, whipped, and sworn at when a particle of the day's pastime seems to go wrong, for it need not go wrong; the semblance of error is enough to establish in a nervous and irritable temperament, such as I describe, a temporary insanity. Horses' eyes have been knocked out in these humours, dogs have been shot, while curses and kicks were bestowed on their friends and serving-men. If old gentlemen were wise when they arrived at this impossible pitch for active pleasure, and had anything to fall back upon, which some of them perhaps have not, they would at once seek a quieter pursuit, or at least one wherein nothing alive could suffer by the demon phase to which a long and a spoiled life had brought them. Unless some of these persons in the situation to which I am alluding do change, age will at last take them out of their saddles and seat them in an arm-chair, whence the link of their wilful lives will be for a time continued by their casting such missiles as may be at hand at their wives or their women, in an attempt to do mischief, until they collapse from the over-exertion, and like the Grandfather Smallweed of "Boz," lie inanimate until shaken up for another attempt at abortive violence.

Speaking of irritability on certain points, all men, the best of men, are liable to that. A noble lord was once riding on his shooting pony, with the gun on the pommel of the saddle, when the fact of its being cocked was noticed by a clergyman, who was walking by his side. To the remark, "Your gun is cocked, my lord!" the reply was, "D—n me, sir, it's the first thing I do of a morning in my dressing-room!" Again, there is a story told of another noble lord, who had invited a clergyman to shoot with him, which is rather funny. Addressing his hearers, his lordship said, "Now, gentlemen, mind, look out! there is a pied pheasant, the only one I have in the cover we are going to beat, so mind you, *look out!*" He was not a man who permitted much question on such occasions; so, if any of the party had felt a little at a loss as to how they were to understand this caution to "look out for the pied pheasant," no one dared ask for further information, and the day's shooting began. They had scarcely been in the cover a minute when bang went a gun, and the parson's voice, raised to a pitch of bold hilarity by the successful deed which was at once to raise him in his lordship's favour, was heard crying out, "All right, my lord, I've got him! A beautiful bird! An almost white cock-pheasant with scarce a coloured feather about him; here he is!" Saying which the reverend gentleman came skipping over the brambles, and without seeing his mistake, deposited the sacred trophy in his entertainer's lap. Had the thorns and entanglement of the cover permitted him to look up, he would have seen that he was addressing a livid statue, and that he had better have run home to the precincts of his own altar than approach his noble friend. He was soon brought to a true insight of the state of things by hearing the livid statue thus apostrophise his hearers: "Here! come here, all of you; somebody take this man's gun from him, and, sir, I—I—I, sir—go home."

A circumstance very similar to this happened to my friend Mr. William Knyvet, of whose exploits I have previously made mention. He had a day's shooting, during my father's time, given him at Cranford; luckily for him he went out alone, attended by the keeper William Booth. No caution was given him as to what he was to shoot at, and while the keeper was driving a small clump of cover he heard a pheasant rise, and the keeper call out "pie"; however, he took a shot at the bird as it came over his head and killed it. Out came the keeper, black in the face with indignation. "Good God, sir," exclaimed the man, "what are you about? Didn't you hear me call out 'pie,' and why the devil, sir, did you dare to shoot? My lord never allows a pied pheasant to be shot at." "Pie," said Mr. William Knyvet, taking up the bird, whose under-plumage was of the usual colour, the white feathers being on his back and tail; "pie—why, you might just as well have called out 'pudding' for all the information it conveyed to me; I did not know you had a pied pheasant in the country."

I have heard it said of a gentleman who keeps a splendid pack of foxhounds, that one day as he rode home with a poorly-paid clergyman whom he met by the way (for indeed, kind reader, there are but too many of those), they fell into conversation as to the worth of the huntsman's place.

"What, sir, do you give your huntsman?" the clergyman asked; "I dare say he has as much as I have?"

"What should you think?" rejoined the master of hounds.

"Why, perhaps," the clergyman replied, after some consideration, "his place may be worth a hundred a year."

"More than that," said the master of the foxhounds, "one way or another he gets about three hundred a year."

"Goodness me, sir!" said the divine, "why, that is double my pay!"

"Very likely," rejoined his companion, "but then you must know we require a clever man for a huntsman, and any d—d fool does for a parson."

It is odd, when you think of the fate of younger brothers. A youth bred up from a child in the lap of luxury; sent to the best schools, or kept under a private tutor at home, and then placed at Oxford or Cambridge, where, from his birth and position in life, he makes acquaintance with all the "tufts" and silver-spooned men of his year, to go out at last into the world on a profession. On what? On a living perhaps of a couple of hundreds a year; and his fond but self-deceiving parents assert "he is provided for." Why, if that young man is to eat and drink, and clothe himself so as not to be cut for a beggarly appearance by his silver-spooned friends, and to have an occasional penny in his pocket to relieve the deserving poor, how on earth is he to live? At home he had every luxury given him, at college he was forced into wine parties when he should have trained his stomach as well as his brains to "the living," forsooth, that was to be his portion, and then when he commenced to live on his own account it was expected that he should at once fall into the fare of the cheapest and smallest beer and bacon. His father dies, perhaps his elder brother having succeeded to the estates calls to see him, and hears a tradesman dun him for money, and then asks him the question of "Why don't he pay his debts?" "Why don't you go in and win?" is often said to a boy at school in a battle in which he is getting thrashed, and there is as much wisdom in the question of "Why don't you pay your debts?" as there is in the advice to "go in and win." How can a man pay who has no money, or a boy "go in and win" who is knocked down whenever he faces his antagonist? There is nothing so respectable, or more to be admired, or more useful than a good parish priest, and yet I have known them well acquit themselves of their arduous duties on a salary that had I offered it to my first whipper-in he would have left me. There is nothing more despicable than a bad or neglectful clergyman; I fell among two or three in Bedfordshire, and had plenty of opportunities of seeing how the dissenter, and in short every form of religionist, added to their congregations from the flocks of the established shepherd, whose ministry and life were alike erroneous; and also how vain it was to expect the bishop of the diocese to check or punish them. I have a remarkable letter by me now from the bishop of that ilk in which, in reply to a letter of mine enumerating sins enough to have got a gentlemanly layman shot, or any one but the colonel of a militia regiment, who was in the army or navy, cashiered, he tells me that unless I can bring forward charges against the delinquent touching clerical or unclerical facts, "he can't interfere." This is a sad state of things, calling, loudly calling, for reformation by some court clerical, to which more summary power should be given, at least to set, if not our houses, our churches in better order. It is against the most Christian stomachs to receive water from an impure vessel. From having been regarded in the light of "the squire" of more than one vicinity, I can form a fair opinion of the good or evil that an incumbent of a living may do. For myself, as a layman, I try to do all the good I can; very little, indeed, I have to give, but still there is always something for a deserving poor creature; at the same time I set my face against an indiscriminate charity. It is the fashion now to attempt to cover a multitude of sins by being what is vauntingly termed "good to the poor." This fashion so adopted by fine ladies and gentlemen, whose showy charities are well understood by the people in cottages and huts, whom they personally visit, is so slighted that I have seen the little ragged children make their parents laugh approvingly when they have thumbed their noses behind the ladies as they left the cottage door. My maxim is to draw a strong line between a good poor person and a rogue; if you relieve the bad as well as the good you put a premium on vice, and suggest it to the mind of the good that they might as well be bad, and to the bad that even by gifts from their superiors they are not put or held up as at a disadvantage. No one *deserves* praise for being charitable. The fact itself carries, or ought to carry, so much pardonable self-gratification with it, that where a man is charitable the donor should feel more happy than the receiver. I know that I do when I give anything away; perhaps novelty causes the feeling in me, because I have so little to give, and were I richer the grace might wear off.

I remember my keeper coming to me, and reporting that, to use his words, "there was a rummish-looking customer" in a little planted gravel-pit, near the new church at Highcliff, who had passed a night there, and said he should do the same on the night of the day when this report was made. I was angry at this, and said I would not have vagrants of the sort lying about in the plantations, and ordered the "rummish customer," as he was called, to be put out. Seeing that my men evidently thought that this would be a matter of some difficulty, and having a great stout under-keeper, whom I thought too big to be a high-plucked man (for I have often noticed that Providence is inclined to make things even, by giving the most courage to the smallest size, of course with some exceptions), I resolved to try this servant at the vagrant, as men run terriers at a badger. Not choosing, however, to rely on the report of my keeper, I told my tall under-man to be near, and I myself went into the pit to see the "rum customer." The willows and bushes were very thick, so I could not make out more than that there was a man lying down. "Hey, my man," I said, "you must not stay here; come, get up and be off." "Humph," replied a gruffish voice, "that's easier said than done." Angry at what I took for an insolent reply, and forgetting that I intended to try my under-keeper, I at once broke through the bushes, and made up to the man. He was still among the grass, and in length of limb was a biggish-*looking* fellow, and acting under the first impression of insolence, I was about to lay my hand on his collar, with the words, "Get up, and go you must," when I was arrested, by a voice, certainly a little hoarse, but which in tones of obedience said, "Very well, sir." I stood stock-still, there was a melancholy expression in his voice, he looked very much jaded and worn, and as in obedience to my order he prepared to rise, I saw him adjusting an old shoe and tattered bandage on a terribly lame foot. His whole bearing was so different from what I had been led to expect, that the tone of severity in which I had spoken to him in the first instance seemed to recoil upon me as a heartless rudeness, so I put my hand gently on his shoulder, and said, "No, my friend, sit down, you don't seem well." The change in my voice and manner, I suppose, was too much for him, for he refrained from attempting to rise, and burst into tears like a child. It was a good deal too much for me, and made me a child too; so to divert the feeling, I called out loudly for my underman Mr. Cox, but who did not or would not hear me, therefore I bade my poor friend sit still till I came back; indeed I was glad to get away, to become a man, as they say, once more. Getting home as fast as I could, I obtained some nice bread and meat, and filled a soda-water bottle with beer, and went back to the gravel-pit. I sat down by the poor fellow, and spread out the viands, in hope of seeing him fare rejoicingly; he tried to eat to oblige me, but at last fairly said he had no appetite, and would sooner keep the food by him as well as the beer, out of which he swallowed but a spoonful or two. Not liking to let him sleep out another night, my desire to serve him got above my usual shilling, and on giving him half-a-crown, and some more food, he rose and hobbled off in thankfulness on his road to Lymington. I believe he was an object of charity; I think he said he came from Preston, or some of the manufacturing places, and that he had been a "compositor"; and I hope that the little I could do for him was as acceptable to him as it was to me, for, indeed, I was very well pleased.

Let not people suppose that when a man leads the life of a sportsman, that his time is thrown away on a course of life, unprofitable as well as harsh to himself and the surrounding poor. A sportsman's habits bring him into very wholesome contact with all his neighbours, particularly with the yeoman and labourer, who at times join him in the open-hearted spirit, which a common pursuit and pleasure induces. The young lord of the estate learns by personal practice to view his tenants in the light of companions and friends, as well as mere machines to pay him the rent, through which he procures his pleasures. Contact and conversation with them in scenes of amusement give him an insight into their characters, and show him that there may be a very good soul contained in a smock-frock, and that it is not always the best heart and readiest hand that beats under laced vests or abides in a kid glove. The pleasures he pursues, though guarded and asserted ever so strictly, should be shared in by his tenants, and made to remunerate the labouring population as much as possible, and they should be taught to discover that in game-preserving, they invariably were the gainers, by an abstinence from illegal offence. It has ever been my plan to give a labouring man who brought me a leveret, or took care of a nest of pheasants or partridges, three times as much as he could have got had he stolen them, while at the same time, the above fact having been made known, I have never failed to enforce the law against all offenders, and I have found that a sharp punishment has made a thievishly-inclined and bad labourer a trustworthy and good one. My reminiscence as well as my experience, as a justice of peace, a game preserver, and a gentleman, addicted to all the sports of the field, lead me to the conclusion, that a man can be a sportsman and an accomplished and graceful member of society at one and the same time, and that there is no class in the community whose situation can be more usefully beneficial than that possessed by the owner of the castle, the manor-house, or mansion; their knowledge of their tenantry, and of all the working classes, fitting them the more aptly to become the first ministers as well as the parliamentary servants of the Crown.

# NOTES

# NOTES

It has been said by some authors, and I think by Mr. Colquhoun, in his *Moor and Loch*, that the word "hevier," signifying a castrated deer, has been derived from the French. Although we are indebted to the French for many of our sporting terms, in this instance the word has an entirely English source. The real word is "Aver"; and in an old book in the possession of the late Mr. Pyrke, of Dean Hall, in the Forest of Dean, the title of which I forget, we found the line, "And thus a rugged colt becomes a noble aver." On looking further we ascertained that an "aver" signified a "cart-gelding."

In the breeding of dogs there are two sorts of uses to which they are put, in which perfection is all a chance. You are pretty sure, by an attention to the sire and dam, to breed a good hound, a good greyhound, a good pointer, a good spaniel, and a good terrier; but take what choice you please among the best dog and bitch retrievers, to breed a good one is a matter of great uncertainty. One of the causes to which I attribute this is, that generally the best retrievers are not thorough-bred dogs, and *if two half-bred dogs are bred from, the offspring is sure to deteriorate.* The same fact as to retrievers applies to fighting-dogs; whatever the sire and dam may be, no man, for that purpose can, with any approach to certainty, count upon the game or punishing capabilities of the whelps. The cross for a retriever that I like best, is that between the Newfoundland dog and the setter.

At one time I paid great attention to the breed of gaze or deer greyhounds, and, certainly, by crosses at different times, I had in my possession the largest and fastest dogs I ever saw in my life. Smoker was one of them; his mother I know was the common English greyhound, but as to his sire, the farmer who bred him said, "he was some sort of a large foreign dog, but he could not tell me what." Smoker, crossed with a greyhound called Vagrant, given to me by Mr. Thorpe, of Chippenham, near Newmarket, continued much of his speed and power, but not his commanding size. I have also crossed the English greyhound with the

St. Bernard as well as with the great Danish coach-dog; I bred from the largest bitch of the latter description I ever saw in my life, but her whelps, generally speaking, were worth nothing; one only which in shape followed the sire was good for anything, and that I gave away. By these crosses I have produced enormous dogs; but if two of the crosses met, the want of the thorough breed on one side or the other made every litter deteriorate. Nature draws a line, and tells the breeder, unmistakably, that he shall breed dogs to a certain size, and no larger. Those of my readers, therefore, who wish to breed good dogs, must never go beyond one cross, but that effected, the next must go back either on the part of the sire or the dam, to a pure race.

In breeding those beautifully-plumaged birds the hybrids, mules between the cock-pheasant and the bantam or common barn-door fowl, or the game hen, they can only be bred from the male of the pheasant; it is extraordinary, the curious facts as to these birds that I have elicited. It was at one time affirmed by naturalists, that no bird that had not laid eggs, would sit. The hybrids, who are mules to all intents and purposes, will sit without laying, and hatch the eggs of other fowls, and be to the chickens the best of mothers.

The first instance I had of this was in a small aviary into which I had put a hen hybrid, who had lost a foot in a rabbit trap, as nothing could keep her from straying. I found her one morning sitting in a corner, and thought she was ill. At feeding-time she came out of the corner very hungry, and, having fed, returned to the corner again. I could not make this out at first; but on watching her I saw that in the corner was an oyster-shell, the white side uppermost, and this she took great care of, and sat on it as an egg. If, when she came off to feed, I displaced the shell, she always put it back again underneath her, just as the common fowl would do by an egg. Having ascertained that she was sitting, fearful that she might not sit the usual period, I took from under a bantam five eggs that only wanted five days of hatching, and placed them under her. She hatched them all, and, on being put into a coop, reared the chickens after the most approved fashion, keeping to her charge until they grew so completely to maturity that they deserted her. The second instance was in a larger aviary, in which I was breeding from a cock-pheasant and bantam hens. I had put three hybrids in the same aviary for safety, and one of them took to sitting. She hatched four or five chickens from eggs put under her in the same way, and proved a most excellent foster-mother. Although these hybrids now are at large round my house, they never in that way have attempted to sit; it has only been in aviaries where they were confined, and where, I am perfectly certain, they never laid an egg. I see no reason why a mule should not lay, because hens will lay without a male bird, though the egg will come to nothing, but so far as my long experience goes of these mules, I am induced to believe that they never bring forth an egg under any circumstances. In breeding these hybrids, not more than one egg in two or three hundred comes to perfection, otherwise they would make a beautiful variation to the bag in a day's shooting. They are very much inclined to stray, and what is fatal to their safety when they do so, is, that they are just as incautious and tame to strangers and in strange places, as they are to those who have reared them, and, consequently, easily captured and killed. I have four of them, who at the present time come to feed at the drawing-room window, and one of them, a beautiful pied bird, enters the room and feeds out of Mrs. Berkeley's hand.

In a conversation on game, which I had with Mr. Shaw Lefevre, he told me that his keeper having found several young pheasants killed, which were rearing tame at the hen-coops, he watched, and discovered an old hen-pheasant in the act of killing them, and that in consequence he shot her. Rather a dangerous precedent to be promulgated by way of example to other keepers, for this reason. There is not an old hen-pheasant sitting adjacently to the hen-coops, who, when she comes to seek for food at the place where in all probability she herself was reared, who will not peck on the back of the head, and kill every newly-hatched young pheasant or partridge, or chicken for that matter, that gets in her way. Cock-pheasants will do this as well as hens, and for that reason as well as others, the little crates or boarded walls in front of the several coops should be, till the young birds attain a certain size, covered with a net. This keeps the full-grown pheasants out, and retains the young brood to the individual hen who hatched them. If this is not done, when there are many coops of variously-aged birds, they will intermix, and hens knowing the strangers, the little birds who stray will get killed.

In illustration of what I have said in regard to manner and method with hounds, since my residence at Beacon the following facts came under my notice. An old travelling fox found out good quarters in a small patch of gorse at Highcliff. Thence he paid nightly visits to my tame pets, and carried off no end of bantams, pheasants, and rabbits. "You are welcome," I said, "but I will have some payment out of you in sport." Accordingly, I invited Mr. Shedden from the New Forest to hunt him. We found him in the little patch of gorse, and, slipping away through the plantations which join it, unseen, he ran a ring by Mudeford, and came back to Highcliff, the scent being very indifferent. A long check then took place in the plantations, when a farmer came up to say he had that moment met the fox crossing the high-road on the other side the village. The hounds were then at a check, and had Mr. Shedden lifted them to where the farmer was ready to take him, the fox would have had the hounds only five minutes behind him over that road. Instead of this the hounds were "let alone," and, after a vast deal of delay, they picked out the line across my lawn, over Chuton Plough, and up to the road where Mr. Aldridge the farmer had viewed the fox, and, consequently, by my watch, they reached the road twenty minutes behind their fox, instead of five minutes. Thus, by a judicious lift, fifteen minutes would have been saved. The hounds then carried the line coldly over Chuton Common, through Dr. Wyndham's, and along the harsh cold ground between the Lymington road and the New Forest on to Ashley Common. The distance, as the hounds ran, ring to Mudeford and all, was perhaps seven or eight miles, done by them at a very slow pace, but I suspect that the fox did the distance at the very top of his speed; for he fell back towards his pursuers, and on seeing or hearing some shooters in a wood ahead of him, was glad of the excuse to lie down. His method of crossing the common showed uncertainty and distress, and, refusing to take the brook at the foot of it, he went a long distance on its bank, and then retraced his steps; so closely did he retrace his footsteps, that on the hounds returning with the scent, Mr. Shedden made the remark to me, that "he feared it was on heel." I said I thought the hounds were right, and that they were so was proved by their not going all the way back; but on reaching about half way, they paused at a place on the brook they had previously passed, and hit him over. We all went through a sort of gateway or ford between the wood and the hounds, and as we did so we met the fox not two hundred yards before the pack. The fox either lay down or passed through some rough grass and thorns which hid him; the hounds were at a check, and Mr. Shedden touched his horn. Seeing that the hounds did not come, I slipped back, down the side of the wood; but seeing a whipper-in there, I went on and re-crossed the brook to look out that way, and took my stand on a rise on the common, commanding a full view of Mr. Shedden and his hounds. I had not been there a moment when I saw a labourer on the common point with his hand towards Mr. Shedden, and holloa. I was soon by the man's side and stopped his noise, for he as well as myself then saw the fox showing every symptom of distress not a hundred yards from the hounds and Mr. Shedden, trotting slowly over a cold wet fallow behind them, on and about which they were checking. The fox came on towards me, and seeing my red coat, he instantly crouched down in a furrow. Mr. Shedden and his hounds were a vast deal nearer to him than I was, and had I holloaed, the chances were that Mr. Shedden, if he came, would come over the ford of the brook, which, from its nature not its size, was not at that place jumpable, and be farther from his fox than ever. I therefore sat still, the fox and myself looking at each other, and hoped the hounds would hit him off. This they did not do; and, seeing that they still were left puzzling about the fallows, I ventured on one cry to call attention, and hoisting my hunting-cap on my whip to solicit peculiar notice; thus we remained for many minutes. I think Mr. Shedden must have seen my raised cap, rather a remarkable act in a former master of hounds, and one which I thought would not be slighted; however, no notice seemed to be taken of it, and the fox having rested, and grown tired of our mutual inspection, rose, shook himself, and started at a nasty long-going canter, that looked as if he had caught a second wind, running parallel with the brook, and at last crossing a road close by Mr. Thomas Wyndham, who immediately holloaed him. I galloped down the brook, and joined Mr. Wyndham, and there we sat and holloaed till we were tired. After at least a quarter of an hour's delay, or more, Mr. Shedden brought his hounds, and, to my amusement, pettishly asked us what we were holloaing at. I said, "What else but our fox!" The error of this "let-'em-alone" plan was, that instead of a view at a blown and beaten fox, the hounds were put a quarter of an hour behind a rested fox, who, in addition to his rest, had just swam through a cold brook, and consequently started with his extremities chilled and his mouth shut, leaving for a time still less scent than ever. The hounds in fact could not speak to it, but a holloa ahead took them on, and, as I have often seen to happen after crossing water with both deer and fox, the line warmed up again, and the hounds could mark him. We held him on some way with repeated checks, so far, that I confess that every moment I expected the hounds to hunt up to him in a hedgerow and kill him, but to my astonishment, with his line, though cold, still extant, Mr. Shedden gave him up and went home.

In keeping hounds, many men, with an idea of economy, at times feed them on rice, on biscuit, and even on indifferent or coarse flour. In offering such masters advice, I would recommend them to abstain from these errors, and to feed their hounds while they keep them on the best coarse-ground and kiln-dried oatmeal, the older the meal is the better, and the further it will go. I do not think that it is economy to do anything ill: to farm ill is ruin to an agriculturist, and to be fed ill is ruin to a pack of hounds. That master who feeds his pack on the stuff I have described, does not get out of his creatures the worth of his penny; while if he fed them with the best food, he would assuredly have the value of his pound. Iron boilers and good old meal, with the meat from cows and horses, the fresher the better, no soup used after it gets stale, is the only food that puts a hound behind his fox in the best possible condition.

By way of still illustrating the fact, that truth is more wonderful than fiction, my readers will be astonished when I tell them, that if a grey horse, a bay, a chestnut or a black one, are boiled fairly in two different boilers, I will, on being shown the soup, declare which broth is made from the grey horse. The soup from the grey horse, however nearly white he may be, is of a darker colour than any of the others.

I would train my greyhounds on oatmeal, but for this reason, in travelling you can't take your iron boiler with you; and to change the food of a running dog is to throw him out of condition. Therefore, and therefore only, I feed my greyhounds on biscuit, which is portable, and can be procured in most places.

One word on passing events, and on a measure dropped this session in the Houses of Parliament as to "dogs in harness." When in Parliament, I successfully resisted the attempt to take from ten thousand families the means of earning their livelihood, and prevented the destruction of twenty thousand dogs, more or less, which would inevitably have been doomed to death had that false-hearted measure succeeded. The enmity to the dog-barrow arises for the most part in ignorance or in sundry tailor-like riders, who, when their horses have shied, have tumbled off, and this is confessed by the innumerable anonymous letters that from time to time have appeared in the papers of the day, all of which acknowledge to a fall. Also there is an unhappy race of beings in this world who feel so convinced that they need to raise for themselves characters of humanity, that they must seize on some passing circumstance on which to found their desires. The poor, as I have before said, are sure to go to the wall in any alleged reformation, and therefore in this instance, the poorest of all are taken on whom to work a hardship on the score of humanity. I hear, through anonymous writers, not one word of whose communications I believe, that all sorts of cruelties are practised on dogs in harness; one of these nameless correspondents of the *Morning Herald* stated, that when one dog dropped dead in harness, or had been cruelly despatched by his owner's knife, had then been immediately given as food to his canine companions. That dogs are starved, beaten, or cruelly treated, etc. etc. etc., and that nature by the formation and peculiarities of the dog, has pointed out to man its unfitness as a beast of draught.

A dog, in proportion to its size and strength, is more fitted than a horse to draw burthens. It is almost impossible to gall his shoulders, from the movable nature of his skin, and he needs no shoes nailed to his feet to protect them against the roads, nor an iron gag in his mouth to guide him. The moment the dog-cart stops, the dog can and will on the cold stones, their very coldness being a comfort to him, lie down and rest and sleep. If he is near water, he will lie down in that, and be the more refreshed. A horse will not nor cannot do this in harness, and were he to lie down on cold flag-stones or in water, or even stand in the cold air when in a perspiration, the horse would very likely die. The dog perspires at the mouth, and is not susceptible of the illness commonly called a cold, and, according to his size, is capable of greater exertion, and of a continuance of it, than any other animal. As to "the poor things panting in harness," a dog will pant from running a hundred yards or less; it does not proceed from distress, but very often from pleasure. I take it on myself to affirm, that there is far less cruelty inflicted on dogs in harness than on horses. In all the barrows I have ever seen I never saw a lean dog, or a dog low in condition, and never knew one either galled in the shoulders or withers, or with sore feet; and, I never saw one, that when taken out of his barrow, when the time came to work again, who did not race rejoicingly up to it, barking with pleasure to be reharnessed. As to "cruelly beating the dogs in harness," that is not often done, and not one quarter done in proportion to numbers as in the case of horses and asses, and for this very good reason: if you savagely ill-treat a dog, you may make him lie down and crouch at the feet of his tyrant, but all the whips in the world won't make him draw. It was cruel enough to murder by legislation the contented and well-fed dogs that worked in harness for the poor in cities and towns, and it was as cruel to take from cripples their only method of locomotion, from those who were conveyed from place to place by their dogs, which the bill, banishing the dog-barrows from the pavements, did. The worst of all was the fact regarding the poor little living Trunk, for his thighs were off close to the body, whose two contented and fat dogs used to draw him in a little cart to a sunny wall in Piccadilly, and there sit by his side, the only things in the world that seemed to love him. The bill of the "over-righteous" self-seekers passed, and this poor little object of compassion to every really charitably-disposed heart, was condemned for ever to grovel on the earth, or crawl, a worm, on the face of it. There was much that was wretched in his death, though perhaps attended by a ghastly comicality. Torn by this tyrannical bill from his dogs and from the possibility of rendering himself visible in the great thoroughfare, he had no means of receiving money for his support or theirs, and with a broken heart the poor cripple was obliged to consign his beloved four-footed companions to death; and then, as a last relief from the monotony of the cold ground, and in the hope of earning a few pence, he let himself out to a barrel-organ on wheels, sitting over the restless machine, and having a small share in the day's profits. The gut of a fiddle would have broken in such a grinding situation, no wonder then that after enduring the constant grinding of the machine beneath him, this poor cripple became insane and died. I fearlessly assert, that dozens of rich men, or men capable of keeping skittish horses, but not their seats in the saddle, had better tumble off, as by their own account they invariably do when their horse shies, than ten thousand of the poorest families should be thrown out of their bread, or twenty thousand useful sagacious and affectionate animals murdered. I say to all those who wish to take dogs out of harness, that the worst fault men calling themselves

Christians can have, is to be wicked on behalf of righteousness, and cruel out of piety. Let us not have a code of laws for the government of man which begets selfishness and partiality only to the rich or to its own followers, while it inspires hatred, outrage, and condemnation to the poorest of the poor.

In the recent alterations made in the tax on dogs a great oversight has been committed in not taking steps while a change was under consideration, to remedy the injustice of rendering greyhound puppies liable to duty at six months old. A greyhound does not come into sporting use till twelve months old, when, as the most dangerous period of his existence is that which lies between six and twelve months, the owner of litters of greyhounds are often made to pay tax for a creature whom they never use. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred at the above-mentioned age, a greyhound whelp and puppy has to combat for existence with the distemper as well as the yellows, and the chances are two to one in favour of death, or some constitutional debility entailed by the disease, which will render the animal useless for any sporting purpose. It would, therefore, be infinitely more just to fix the age for the payment of the tax at twelve instead of at six months, and in the end more conducive to the interests of the revenue, for a greater number of greyhounds would be bred than at present; and if the brood bitch sworn to as never used in the field, was also exempted from charge, that too would increase the stock. It was, undoubtedly, the intention of the law to charge for the use of the dog of every description, and not for his mere existence; for a man may keep a Newfoundland or other dog to guard his house free of duty, if he does not use them in the field. "Sharp practice" is always the word with the tax-collector or surveyor and the gentleman, while "loose and easy" is the word between those functionaries and the thief of game and deer. For this reason, that the one will not take a false oath, and has money to pay; while the other will swear anything, and forces the tax-gatherer to remember the old adage as to "what he is likely to catch in suing a beggar." The tax on dogs is a good one, properly enforced, and an even one, too, if all were made to pay who are liable: the poor man paying for one, and the gentleman for many; but I regret to say that the tax-collector is perhaps the worst, the most unjust and uneven, of all those employed in the collection of the revenue, and never half looked-up by the district commissioners. If every man was made to pay for a licence to kill game, who notoriously and openly does kill it, and all paid tax for dogs who used them for sporting, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would find an agreeable addition to his ways and means, and might let the collectors wink at their immediate friends in their own sphere of life, who either gave them dinners, or in the case of their superiors, employed them in their several trades. This corrected state of things will never be unless the reformation comes through the commissioners, and, as in some cases, the commissioners would have to put their own houses in order before they "looked up" the habitations of their underlings, why I shall as soon see the alteration which I sincerely desire, as Lord John Russell will the end of his Reform Bill, for which he ever and anon pretends so much solicitude.

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